

DHAULAGIRI CIRCUIT, NEPAL



Dhaulagiri Base Camp



HIGHLIGHTS

- Roland Hunter, the owner and founder of The Mountain Company, will lead the October 2010 Dhaulagiri Circuit.
- Dhaulagiri Circuit is known as one of the best circuit treks in Nepal visiting remote and rarely travelled area through the Chonbarden Gorge and Hidden Valley.
- This is a challenging trek although would be suitable for anyone who is fit with some previous experience trekking at high altitude.
- The itinerary has been carefully designed to ensure sufficient acclimatisation as well including a number of rest days to maximise the chance of crossing the passes and completing the circuit.

REASONS TO CHOOSE THE MOUNTAIN COMPANY FOR DHAULAGIRI CIRCUIT

- Roland will lead our Dhaulagiri Circuit trek in October in 2010, he knows the trek well having successfully completed the circuit with a group in May 2008.
- Our itinerary has been carefully designed to ensure sufficient acclimatisation as well as including a number of spare days to maximise the chance of crossing the passes.
- Mountain Hardwear Trango 3.1 tents are used for all of our camping treks in Nepal. These are three person domed tents with plenty of space for two people sharing plus gear.
- We bring a satellite phone for logistical, safety and personal use.
- We provide all porters with windproof jacket & trousers, crampons and shelter as per IPPG Guidelines.
- There will be a range of tasty meals for breakfast, lunch and supper. We also bring along a supply of chocolate bars, Pringles, biscuit and nuts.



- We bring a comprehensive first aid kit from UK (Life Systems Mountain Leader) plus high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines.
- Everyone's blood oxygen saturation and heart rate is measured twice daily using a pulse oximeter in order to monitor how the group is adjusting to the altitude.
- Pre trip support will be given by Roland via email, phone or face to face meetings. In the past members have arranged to meet up prior to the trek.

"Dhaulagiri was great. The days from arrival at Base Camp, over Hidden Valley, and down to Marpha were outstanding and I will always remember them. Thanks very much for arranging it. It was all quite an adventure." George Muir, Dhaulagiri Circuit May 2008



DHAULAGIRI CIRCUIT

Total number of days	20 days
Grade & days trekking	Strenuous (Mountaineering), 15 trekking days
Accommodation	4 nights hotel, 15 nights camping
2010 price from Kathmandu	£1,395 (US\$2,365)
Minimum group size	6
Dates	October 10th to 29th 2010 (Roland Hunter) April 24th to May 13th 2011 October 9th to 28th 2011



THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- All internal transport and transfers including airport collections.
- Internal flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara and at the end of the trek from Jomsom to Pokhara & Kathmandu.
- Twin share room at Hotel Tibet in Kathmandu.
- Breakfast only in Kathmandu, all meals included while on trek.
- Twin share tents while on trek using our three person Mountain Hardwear Trango 3.1s.
- All trekking arrangements including permits and fees, tents, Western and Sherpa guides, porters and cook.
- Complimentary Dhaulagiri trekking map.
- Financial protection insurance with International Passenger Protection.

THE FOLLOWING SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IS AVAILABLE:

Single room supplement	£80
Single tent supplement	£125

Please note that if you are a single person booking on one of our trips you do not have to pay the single room supplement, this is only payable if you specifically request to have a room or tent to yourself. You will not have to pay this for this option if you happen to end up with a single room or tent due to odd numbers on the trip.

THE FOLLOWING IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- International flight to/from Kathmandu (London from £550).
- Travel & trekking insurance (Snowcard from £70).



- Nepal visa for 30 days at US\$40 (approx £25).
- Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu.
- Personal clothing & equipment, please see Appendix for suggested kit list.
- Tips (guidance on amounts included in Nepal pre departure information).
- Other items not listed in “What is included”.

YOUR COMPLETE FINANCIAL PROTECTION

In accordance with "The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992" all passengers booking with The Mountain Company are fully protected for the initial deposit and subsequently the balance of all monies paid to us, including repatriation if required, arising from cancellation or curtailment of your travel arrangements due to the insolvency of The Mountain Company.

This Insurance has been arranged by International Passenger Protection Limited and underwritten by Insurers who are members of the Association of British Insurers. A certificate detailing this cover will be given to each passenger as evidence of cover.



PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Participants should be aware trekking, mountaineering and travelling in a developing country are activities that involve a risk of personal injury or death. As a condition of booking you must accept these risks and be responsible for your own actions and involvement.

Adventure travel requires an open and flexible attitude. You may experience extreme conditions, unpredictable weather and last minute changes to the itinerary



beyond our control. Lack of acclimatisation to high altitudes could also be a risk factor. Our itineraries allow optimum time for acclimatising although it is possible that some individuals might be slow acclimatisers.

The majority of our trips visit remote areas where you are away from normal emergency services and medical facilities. In case of a serious injury requiring hospitalisation, it has to be accepted by you, evacuation could take up to several days and may impede your ensuing recovery. Helicopters are the most usual means of evacuation, however they are not always available or they may be hindered by poor weather and flying conditions.

INTRODUCTION

This is a challenging trek around Dhaulagiri the world's ninth highest mountain with a crossing of two Himalayan passes.

This trek explores a wild, remote and off-the-beaten-track area of the Nepal Himalaya. Roland Hunter owner and founder of The Mountain Company will lead our October 2010 departure, he knows the trail well having led a group around Dhaulagiri in May '08.

The trek starts at Beni (or Darbang village) and then follows the Myagdi Khola river passing through beautiful Gurung villages with terraced fields framed by views of the Dhaulagiri massif.

After walking up the narrow Chonbarden gorge towards Dhaulagiri Base Camp we then cross French Pass into Hidden Valley. We then cross Dhampus Pass and start the long descent to Jomsom. At the end of the trek we fly out to Pokhara and back to Kathmandu.



DETAILED ITINERARY

It is our intention to keep to the day by day itinerary detailed below, although there might be some flexibility due to local conditions or other factors beyond our control. If this is the case the trek leader will do everything possible to work out the changes to the itinerary in order to minimise your inconvenience.

Day 1. Arrive Kathmandu and join the tour at the hotel.

You will be met on arrival at Kathmandu airport and driven back to the hotel. Please provide travel plans on booking and we will arrange the pick up and transfer. A full expedition briefing will be given in the afternoon.

Day 2. Fly to Pokara, drive to Beni and trek to Tatopani (870m)- 2 hours driving & 3 hours walking.

On arrival to Pokhara airport we get into a minibus for the short drive to Beni where we will have lunch. From Beni, we leave the Kali Gandaki and head west along the north bank of Myagdi Khola to the hot springs at Tatopani. The camp is near the bridge next to the river.

Day 3. Trek to Dharapani (1,470m)- 6 hours walking.

The trail continues along the Myagdi Khola passing through several villages before reaching Darbang for lunch. We cross the bridge and soon arrive to Phedi and start the climb to Dharapani. This village is mainly gurung and chettri and has our first view of Dhaulagiri to the north.

Day 4. Trek to Muri (1,850m)- 5 hours walking.

Takum and Sibang. These are prosperous villages with many terraced fields mainly growing rice & wheat, also many of the men folk work overseas in the middle east or in the British and Indian Ghurkas. There are good views of Gurja Himal and Puta Hiunchuli to the west.

We cross the Dhara Khola on a suspension bridge and then continue to Muri following the Myagdi Khola flowing from the north. You will have time in the afternoon to explore Muri village.



Day 5. Trek to Boghara (2,080m)- 6 to 7 hours walking.

From Muri, we descend steeply to a bridge over the Muri Khola. After passing through several dense bamboo stands the trail passes through a number of clearing with fields and farmhouses above the Myagdi Khola.

Further north the valley steepens and the trail is exposed in places, however the difficult section before Boghara can be avoided by taking a high route used by porters (highly recommended!). We camp in the grounds of the primary school in this village.

Day 6. Trek to Dobang (2,500m)- 6 to 7 hours walking.

We follow a trail next to the Braldu river and, once passed the snout of the Biafo glacier, we arrive at the green oasis of Korophone.

From here the path drops down to the river and, if the river level is high, then there is one section where we might have to take boots off and cross a section where the river floods the path!

We follow the path up a side valley and cross another river by a good bridge (rather than the old trolley system or “jhola” as used in the past). We then walk for another half an hour or so to reach the Jhola Camp. The views are impressive with Bakhor Das (5,809m) and Paiju Peak’s needles in the distance.

If the sun is out then this can be a very hot day with temperatures often approaching 40 degrees! It is important to bring plenty of water (at least three litres), wear a sun hat and apply plenty of suncream! Overnight camp.

Day 7. Trek to Sallaghari (2,820m)- 5 hours walking.

The trail continues through dense, lush vegetation of ferns, bamboo and rhododendrons. We cross to the east bank of the Myagdi Khola on a rickety bridge and then camp at a clearing in the forest at Sallaghari.

Day 8. Trek to Italian Base Camp (3,660m)- 3 to 4 hours walking.

From Sallaghari we walk through pine trees, rhododendron and birch and then see heather, juniper and azaleas above the treeline. The trail traverses the side of the valley and then climbs to a grassy area on the lateral moraine where Italian Base Camp is located. From the camp the impressive west face of Dhaulagiri towers above with Tsaorabong Peak visible on the other side of the valley.



Day 9. Rest and acclimatisation day.

Today we can either explore around Italian Base Camp on a day walk or relax in camp. This day is essential for acclimatisation.

Day 10. Trek to French Base Camp (3,870m)- 2 hours walking.

Today is a short walk although essential for acclimatisation process, unlike most other itineraries we believe in having two extra nights between Italian Base Camp and main Dhaulagiri Base Camp (otherwise going from 3,660m to 4,740m will result in AMS and possibly worse).

From Italian Base Camp the trail descends steeply through the lateral moraine to gain the glacier, it is likely that we will fix a rope here mainly to help the porters. One crosses the glacier and comes off the moraine on the left side to enter the Chonbarden gorge.

Day 11. Trek to Glacier Camp (4,200m)- 3 hours walking.

Today we walk along talus in the Chonbarden gorge to the snout of the Chonbarden glacier. The glacier is covered in moraine at this point and the trail follows a pressure ridge to Glacier camp.

Day 12. Trek to Dhaulagiri Base Camp (4,740m)- 4 hours walking.

There is a rough trail along the glacier marked by cairns to Dhaulagiri Base Camp. From the camp one can see Dhaulagiri I and Little Eiger, further to the west lies Dhaulagiri II (7,751m) and IV (7,618m). In season there are likely to be many expeditions on the moraine strip at Base Camp, one can also the start of the climbing route above the icefall descending from the col between Dhaulagiri and Tukucho Peak.

Day 13. Rest & acclimatisation day at Dhaulagiri Base Camp.

Day 14. Rest & acclimatisation day at Dhaulagiri Base Camp.

These are essential rest days for acclimatisation before crossing French pass and our campsite in Hidden Valley at 5,100m. There are a number of day walks from Base Camp which are well worth doing and will also help the acclimatisation process (climb high, sleep low).



Day 15. Trek via French col (5,360m) to above Hidden Valley (5,050m)- 7 hours walking.

Today we walk along the Base Camp moraine strip and past several older camps and cross over to the left hand side of the Upper Chonbarden glacier. A high lateral moraine ridge is visible further up the valley, we gain this by following a steep trail across the scree. We continue walking up the lateral moraine ridge with superb views down the valley to Dhaulagiri I and also Tukucho Peak.

The approach to the French pass is up easy angled snow slopes with the top marked by Buddhist prayer flags. From here one can see Sita Chuchura, the peaks of the Mukut Himal, Tashi Kang, Tukucho Peak, and the huge Dhaulagiri I. The descent is across easy snow slopes to enter the Hidden Valley, we camp further down at the base of Dhampus Peak next to our next pass.

Day 16. Trek over Dhampus pass (5,240m) to Yak Kharka (3,680m)- 7 hours trekking.

Today we ascend on snow slopes to Dhampus pass and then after a long snowy traverse (approx. 3 hrs) we finally head down a rocky ridge to Yak Kharka.

An early start is important in order to cross the pass before the customary white out reduces visibility. At Yak Kharka, Dhaulagiri I is hidden by Tukucho Peak, but Nilgiri and the western end of the Annapurna Massif are visible.

Day 17. Trek to Jomsom (2,670m)- 4 to 5 hours walking.

There is a long descent today to the interesting village Marpha in the Kali Gandaki valley with Tibetan whitewashed houses and paved streets. We continue on to Jomsom where tomorrow morning we fly out to Pokhara.

Day 18. Fly to Pokhara & Kathmandu.

Day 19. Sightseeing in Kathmandu.

Day 20. Fly back home.



ETHICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Mountain Company is committed to adopting a responsible attitude to the areas we visit. We are guests of the communities visited and with some thought and care we can ensure that everyone benefits from the experience.

We work closely with the International Porter Protection Group (www.ippg.net) who we support as a Camp 1 sponsor- we abide by their 5 guidelines for porter protection.

We also work with other organisations such as Climate Care (www.climatecare.org), Tourism Concern (www.tourismconcern.org.uk), Friends of Conservation (www.foc-uk.com) and Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (www.keepnepal.org).

We have developed a Responsible Tourism policy which aims to ensure that The Mountain Company and its clients act in a way that is socially, environmentally and culturally sound.

The Mountain Company has joined the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Know Before You Go campaign. The aim is to make sure travellers are properly prepared before travelling overseas. The best way to get the FCO latest advice is to visit their website at: www.fco.gov.uk/travel.

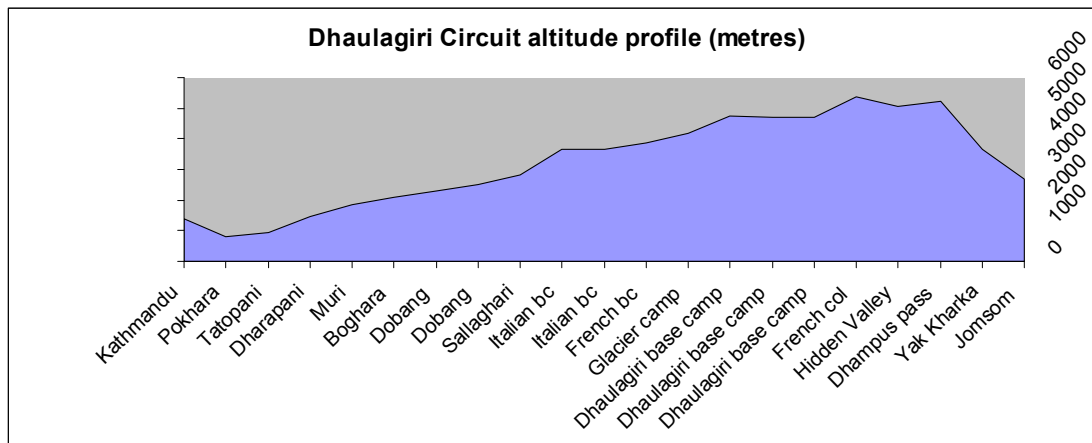




PRACTICAL INFORMATION

ALTITUDE AND ACCLIMATISATION

Our Dhaulagiri Circuit itinerary has been designed for gradual acclimatisation to take place, take a look at the altitude profile for the itinerary below:



There are ways of helping the acclimatisation process, as described below:

- Walk slowly: there is plenty of time included in the itinerary so there is no need to rush, go at your own pace and enjoy the incredible views!
- Drink lots of water: it is easier for your body to acclimatise when hydrated so drink water and avoid coffee, tea and alcohol.
- Consider taking diamox (acetazolamide): before using this drug we recommend consulting a doctor and thoroughly researching the pros and cons.

For further information we suggest you take a look at the following websites:

Base Camp MD website:

<http://www.BaseCampmd.com/expguide/highalt.shtml>

High Altitude medicine website:

<http://www.high-altitude-medicine.com>

Telephone and fax: 0207 4980953 / International callers: +44 207498 0953

Skype ID: Rolandh1 / Email: info@themountaincompany.co.uk

Postal address: Flat 3, 190 Cedars Rd, Clapham, London SW40PP, UK



Medex Travel at High Altitude:

<http://www.medex.org.uk/v26%20booklet.pdf>

BMC website:

<http://www.thebmc.co.uk/Feature.aspx?id=1746>

COMMUNICATIONS

We bring a Thuraya satellite phone for logistical, safety and personal use. Personal calls charged at £3 per minute and £2 to send and receive SMS text.

ACCOMMODATION IN KATHMANDU

In Kathmandu we use Hotel Tibet (three star). The hotel is located close to the British Embassy near to the centre of Kathmandu. It is within walking distance of the Royal Palace and the tourist hub of Thamel.

A TYPICAL DAY ON TREK

The day starts with an early morning mug of tea brought to your tent by one of the cook's helpers. Before heading over to the mess tent for breakfast it is best to pack your overnight gear into your duffel bag. During breakfast the tents will be packed away and, after the porters have arranged their loads, they will set off on the trail in the cool of the morning.

After breakfast, probably between 7am and 8am, we start walking. The pace of the trek is leisurely with plenty of time to enjoy the scenery, take photos and explore the local villages. Lunch will be around 11am at a spot by the side of the trail and is prepared for us by the cooks.

There is more walking after lunch and normally you will get into camp by mid afternoon with the tents already put up by the local staff. In the evening a three course meal is served in the mess tent around 7pm. After supper the western leader will discuss the plan for the next day with the group. People might stay in



the mess tent chatting about the day's events for a while before retiring to their tent for the night.

FOOD

In Kathmandu there is a wide range of excellent restaurants to try out, some of the more popular ones are: K Too Steak House, Everest Steak House, Rumdoodles, Fire and Ice, La Dolce Vita, Mike's Breakfast and New Orleans. Breakfast is provided each morning by the hotel.

While on the trek, the cook will provide good quality food in sufficient quantities. For breakfast you are likely to get porridge or cereal, toast or chapattis, omelettes and a range of hot drinks. On arrival to camp in the afternoon you will be given tea and biscuits and a three course meal will follow later in the evening.

CLIMATE

The traditional trekking season in Nepal is late September to May, with October and November generally recognised as having the best weather. Spring is also a popular time of year with warmer weather and the advantage of seeing spring flowers and rhododendrons in bloom.

This trek will have a wide range of temperatures depending on the altitude and the time of day. In the mountains between 1,000m and 3,500m the nights will be cool, normally around 5°C, and during the day temperatures sometimes rise to 25°C. At higher altitudes temperatures range from about 15°C to -20°C.

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

A list of suggested clothing and equipment for the Dhaulagiri Circuit trek has been included in the Appendix below. This is a comprehensive list and experienced trekkers will often take only a selection of these items based on what has worked in the past. It is worth pointing out that you will need a sleeping bag for this trip.



If you do not have the clothing and equipment contained in this list then a good option might be to rent from the UK. Trek Hire is a company that rents out high quality items at competitive prices which would save you the expense of buying. The link to their website is <http://www.trekhireuk.com/>

Alternatively if you are going to buy then please contact the office for the Cotswold Outdoor promo code that entitles you, as a client of The Mountain Company, to a 15% discount in their stores and online.

Each trekker should bring one backpack for items required during the day. Your day backpack will contain items such as warm clothes, jacket, camera, water bottles, personal first aid kit and snacks.

The rest of your personal equipment packed in a duffel bag or backpack will be carried by a porter. **The maximum weight allowance is 15kgs.** Please ensure that your bag is marked clearly on the outside for easy identification

VISA REQUIREMENTS

All foreigners require a visa for entry into Nepal. It is your responsibility to obtain the entry visa. You can get from a Nepalese embassy overseas or on arrival in Nepal. Most people will obtain their visa on arrival to Kathmandu airport.

You will need one passport photo and the following fees dependent:

15 days USD\$25 or equivalent convertible currency

30 days USD\$40 or equivalent convertible currency

90 days USD\$100 or equivalent convertible currency

VACCINATIONS AND MEDICAL

You should obtain professional advice from a travel clinic or your local GP about which vaccinations to have before you arrive in Nepal. A dental check-up is a good idea as there will be no dental facilities while on the trek.

We bring a comprehensive first aid kit from UK (Life Systems Mountain Leader) plus high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines.

Telephone and fax: 0207 4980953 / International callers: +44 207498 0953

Skype ID: Rolandh1 / Email: info@themountaincompany.co.uk

Postal address: Flat 3, 190 Cedars Rd, Clapham, London SW40PP, UK



FLIGHTS

We recommend Max Travel (ATOL bonded license# 4705) for booking international flights and other travel arrangements. Please take a look at their website at <http://www.maxtravel.co.uk/> or give them a call on 020 7095 0920.

There are a number of good online agents that we also recommend, they are:

Kayak: *an excellent flight cost comparison website* <http://www.kayak.co.uk/>

Traveljungle: *another good flight cost comparison website* <http://www.traveljungle.co.uk/>

Cheap Tickets: this site quotes airfares in USD\$ & often is very competitive when translated back to GBP£ <http://www.cheaptickets.com/>

Southall Travel: very competitive prices for India, Pakistan and Nepal both online and telephone support <http://www.southalltravel.co.uk/>

INSURANCE

Travel insurance for any Mountain Company itinerary is a condition of booking a holiday. At the very least you should have emergency medical and repatriation insurance which must include the cost of mountain rescue. Cancellation insurance is strongly recommended as all deposits paid to The Mountain Company are non-refundable.

To get an online quote for your personal travel and trekking insurance (UK residents only), take a look at Snowcard's website at http://www.snowcard.co.uk/pages/d_select1.asp?referrer_id=MC

Snowcard activity level for Dhaulagiri Circuit trek is 4 and prices start from £88.





Please note that The Mountain Company do not act as an agent of Snowcard Insurance and any policy bought via this web link is effected directly with Snowcard Insurance Services Limited.

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

For those of you who are visiting Nepal for the first time we have provided some cultural information to help you fit in and feel at ease:

- The dress code is important for both men and women. Men and women should wear trousers rather than shorts while trekking.
- There are many hot springs, rivers and lakes where it is pleasant to take a dip, it is fine for men to go bare-chested while bathing but they should not go nude. Women should try and be as modest as possible in these situations.
- Hindus are concerned about the ritual pollution of food when it is touched by someone outside their caste or religion. Therefore, do not touch any cooked foods on display and when drinking from a container used by others avoid touching your lips to it. Do not eat food with your left hand and make sure you only give or receive food with your right hand.
- Shoes are considered degrading so keep them on the ground and remove them before putting your feet on anything. If you enter a Nepali house follow the example of your host in deciding whether to remove your shoes but on entering a temple or monastery you should definitely remove them.
- You will pass Buddhist mani walls, chortens, and stupas along the trek and to follow local traditions you should pass them on your right.
- When visiting a monastery or gompa it is customary to give a donation for its upkeep.



SUGGESTED READING

Please take a look at The Mountain Company's bookstore for a wide selection of books and maps to Nepal, the link is at: <http://astore.amazon.co.uk/themountainco-21>

Annapurna by Maurice Herzog

The Ascent of Rum Doodle by WE Bowman

Nepali Phrasebook by Lonely Planet

MAPS

Dhaulagiri (Nepa Trekking Maps) by Map Himalayan Maphouse 1:87,500 **This map will be included in your welcome pack when you arrive in Nepal.**

Round Dhaulagiri by Shangri La maps 1:125,000



APPENDIX

SUGGESTED CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT LIST

Footwear:

- Walking boots. A pair of water repellent boots with ankle support.
- Gaiters. A pair used to keep boots dry if walking through deep snow or on wet ground.
- Wool and liner socks.
- Trainers/sneakers or sandals. Can be used in camp/lodge in the evenings.

Clothing:

- Waterproof jacket and trousers (goretex or similar).
- Trekking trousers.
- Long sleeve shirts (not cotton).
- Micro fleece.
- Mid to heavyweight fleece.
- Sleeveless or body warmer type fleece.
- Thermals or base layer for top & bottom (merino wool or synthetic).
- Fleece pants.
- Medium weight down jacket (eg. Nuptse jacket by The North Face).

Handwear:

- Fleece gloves.
- Warm mittens and/or gloves.

**Headwear:**

- Wool or fleece hat.
- Sun hat.
- Bandana or scarf.
- Headtorch. Bring extra batteries.
- Sunglasses.

Climbing equipment:

- Mountaineering ice axe and leash.
- Mountaineering crampons.

Personal Equipment:

- Sleeping bag.
- Sleeping mat (eg. Thermarest).
- Backpack large enough to carry water bottles, camera, lunch and extra clothing.
- Stuff sacks for keeping your gear dry and organised.
- Two water bottles (Nalgene wide mouth bottles are the best).
- Sunscreen and lipsalve with a high SPF.
- Insect repellent.
- Water purification tablets (Pristine, Biox Acqua or Acqa Mira).
- Favourite snack food.
- Books, ipod and cards etc.
- Trekking poles.
- Camera with spare batteries and memory cards.
- Insurance certificate.
- Earplugs (optional).



- Baby wipes (optional).
- Hand sanitizer (optional).

Travelling:

- Duffle bag or large backpack for your personal gear on the trek (carried by a porter). Bring a small combination padlock to secure the bag.
- Travel clothes. You will need casual clothing for air travel days and time spent in Kathmandu.
- Toiletry bag include toilet paper, soap, towel, toothbrush, etc.

Personal first aid kit:

Note: we provide a comprehensive group first aid kit but please bring personal medications and other items you might use regularly such as:

- Any personal medications.
- Malaria prophylactic tablets.
- Blister treatment (Compeed patches are the best).
- Rehydration powder eg Dioralyte.
- Analgesics (paracetamol, ibuprofen and aspirin).
- Plasters and zinc oxide tape.
- Throat lozenges.
- Diamox (helps with acclimatisation).