

SIMIKOT TO MOUNT KAILASH



Mount Kailash in Tibet



REASONS TO CHOOSE THE MOUNTAIN COMPANY FOR SIMIKOT TO KAILASH.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

SIMIKOT TO MOUNT KAILASH

Total number of days	21 days
Grade & days trekking	Moderate, 13 trekking days
Accommodation	5 nights hotel, 15 nights camping
2011 price from Kathmandu	£2,895 (US\$4,595)
2011 price from Kathmandu	£2,995 (US\$4,795)
Minimum group size	6
Dates	May 15 th to June 4 th 2011 May 13 th to June 2 nd 2012



THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- Internal flight Kathmandu-Nepalgunj-Simikot airfare
- All transfers including airport collections.
- One day sightseeing in Kathmandu with Nepalese cultural guide and private vehicle.
- 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, Sherpa guide, ponies and cook.
- Transportation in Tibet by 4WD Land Cruiser 4500 (4 passengers in one land cruiser) and support truck.
- Complimentary Simikot trekking map.
- Financial protection insurance with International Passenger Protection.
- Pre departure support and advice from The Mountain Company by email, phone or face to face meetings in London. After booking with us we will send our comprehensive “Nepal Trek Information” notes.

THE FOLLOWING SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IS AVAILABLE:

Single room supplement in Kathmandu	£140 (US\$230)
Single tent supplement	£195 (US\$295)

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 (eg. Snowcard from £64).
- Nepal visa for 30 days at US\$40 (approx £25).
- Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu.
- Personal clothing & equipment, please see the Appendix for suggested kit list.
- Tips (guidance on amounts included in our “Nepal Trek Information” notes).
- Additional US\$85 for Chinese visa applicable to American passport holder as levied by Chinese Government.
- 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 Trekking Company Ltd (“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.



For further information about our financial protection insurance with International Passenger Protection please see Appendix 2.

Telephone and fax: 0207 4980953 / International callers: +44 207498 0953
Skype ID: RoIandh1 / Email: info@themountaincompany.co.uk / www.themountaincompany.co.uk
Postal address: Flat 3, 190 Cedars Rd, Clapham, London SW40PP, UK



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

Starting from the airstrip at Simikot this trek travels through Nepal's remote western district of Humla following the Humla Karnali river to the border with Tibet. We take Landcruisers to the holy Lake Manasarovar and then complete the pilgrims kora around Mount Kailash.

Mount Kailash is the holiest mountain in the Himalaya known as the center of the world for the four great religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Bönpo and Jain. Kailash is perfectly symmetrical and according to one description these faces are made of crystal, ruby, gold, and lapis lazuli. Near the base of the mountain rises four of the most significant rivers of Indian sub continent: Indus, Sutlej, Karnali (a tributary of the Ganges River) and Brahmaputra.

The kora or trek around Mount Kailash is a distance of 50 kilometres (31 miles) and involves crossing one pass at 5,600m. We take four days to complete the kora giving you time for the necessary acclimatisation as well as opportunity to visit three

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main monasteries no doubt you will meet many pilgrims on the trail. After the kora we drive in Landcruisers over the Tibetan plateau and then cross the border back into Nepal near the town of Zhangmu.

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 by Alan in the afternoon.

Day 2. Sightseeing in Kathmandu (1,400m).

Today we explore Kathmandu with a good local guide, the day is flexible depending on what you would like to see but the most popular places generally are:

- Pashupatinath is a Hindu temple with burning ghats on the banks of the Bagmati river.
- Swayambhunath, also known as the monkey temple, is climbed by a long set of steps and has great views of Kathmandu.
- Boudhanath stupa has many traditional gompas hung with strings of multi coloured prayer flags, it attracts many Sherpas and Tibetans for the circumambulations of the stupa (koras).
- Durbar square, which is one of the old capitals of the Kathmandu valley, has a blend of Hindu and Buddhist temples.

Day 3. Fly to Nepalgunj.

We take the short flight to Nepalgunj in western Nepal, there are good views from right side of the plane as we fly close to the Himalayan mountains. Nepalgunj is the largest city in the Terai with a hot and humid climate. Overnight Hotel Batika or Sneeha.

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Day 4. Fly to Simikot (2,750m), trek to Masigaon (2,270m)- 3 to 4 hours walking.

After an early morning start we take a 45 minute flight to Simikot. After an exciting landing at the narrow STOL mountain airstrip we meet the trek crew. After final preparations we start walking to the ridge above Simikot and then descend to Masigaon village where we camp for our first night.

Day 5. Trek to Kermi (2,680m)- 6 hours walking.

From Masigaon the trail continues to the village of Dharapuri then after crossing Humla Karnali we enter Khanglagaon, from there we follow the river to our camp at Kermi. Today there is a lot of ascent and descent as we have to climb out of the gorge at times where there are impassable sections.

Day 6. Trek to Yangar (2,850m)- 4 to 5 hours walking.

Today we climb over a number of ridges with superb views of Saipal Himal and finally arriving to Yangar village near Humla Khola.

Day 7. Trek to Torea (3,400m)- 6 to 7 hours walking.

Come out of the village of Yangar and follow the trail high above Humla Khola before you reach Muchu village further along the river. Walk through orchards and fields of Muchu then climb to a ridge followed by a steep descent into a gorge. Ascend to a ridge then follow the trail along Tumkot Khola then Bumachiya Khola. Once through a steep valley follow the trail to a ridge then descend to Palbang then onto Torea.

Day 8. Trek to Sipsip (4,300m)- 6 hours walking.

From Torea the trail ascends to a ridge near the village of Yari, continue walking to the meadow at Sipsip near the base of the pass. This is a regular trading route into Tibet so you are likely to see traffic of pack animals, traders and pilgrims.

Day 9. Cross Nara Lagna pass (4,600m) then trek to Hilsa (3,700m).

There is a steep ascent for a couple of hours to Nara Lagna pass where there are good views of Saipal and out over the Tibetan plateau. The descent from the pass is on a rocky trail to Humla Karnali then continues further to several stone houses at Hilsa where we camp for the night. Nepal- Tibet border is just over on the other side of the bridge.



Day 10. Drive to Purang (3,900m) and onto Lake Manasarovar.

There is a short walk to Sher, a Tibetan trading post, where we meet our Toyota Landcruisers for the drive to Purang taking about one hour. After lunch we continue driving to our campsite on the shore of holy Lake Manasarovar below Chiu Gompa.

Day 11. Drive to Darchen (4,600), trek to Chhuka gompa (4,750m)- 3 hours walking.

In the morning we drive to the roadhead at Darchen where we start our kora trek around Mount Kailash. The trail heads in a north west direction to Lha Chu valley with Kailash visible to the north. We descend to Darboche where there is a tall pole with prayer flags then we continue across the plain at Shershong and after a further hour we arrive to our first camp near Chhuka gompa.

Day 12. Trek to Damding Donkhang (4,900m)- 5 hours walking.

Today we follow the pilgrims on their kora around Mount Kailash, the trail follows a deep gorge to our camp for the night.

Day 13. Trek to Dikpa Karnak (5,300m)- 7 hours walking.

From camp we walk towards the Diraphuk monastery where you will get views of the north face of Kailash. We continue walking and cross Lha Chu on a bridge then up to the meadows at Dikpa Karnak.

Day 14. Cross Dolma La (5,600m), trek to Zutul Puk gompa (4,800m)- 7 to 8 hours walking.

There is a rocky trail passing a many cairns and a stone hut and camp then up to the summit of Dolma La at 5,600m. From the pass there is a steep descent on a switchback trail to a lake called Gourikund then further down in the valley there is a stone house at Lhamchhukhir. From here there is a more gentle trail descending Lham Chu valley then cross Khado Sanglam river where there is a good view of east face of Kailash. Our camp for the night is at Zutul Puk gompa a little further down the valley.



Day 15. Trek to Darchen, drive to Lake Manasarovar (4,750m)- 5 hours walking.

Today we finish the kora around Kailash arriving back to Darchen at our starting point. We then drive back to Chuku gompa where we camp for the night.

Day 16 to 18. Drive to Zhangmu on China-Nepal border.

After the kora around Kailash we drive in Landcruisers over the Tibetan plateau and then cross the border back into Nepal near the town of Zhangmu.

Day 19. Drive to Kathmandu.

After completing border formalities we enter Nepal and then drive back to Kathmandu.

Day 20. Free day in Kathmandu.

Day 21. Depart Kathmandu for homeward flights.



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; please refer to Appendix III in this Trip Dossier.

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.

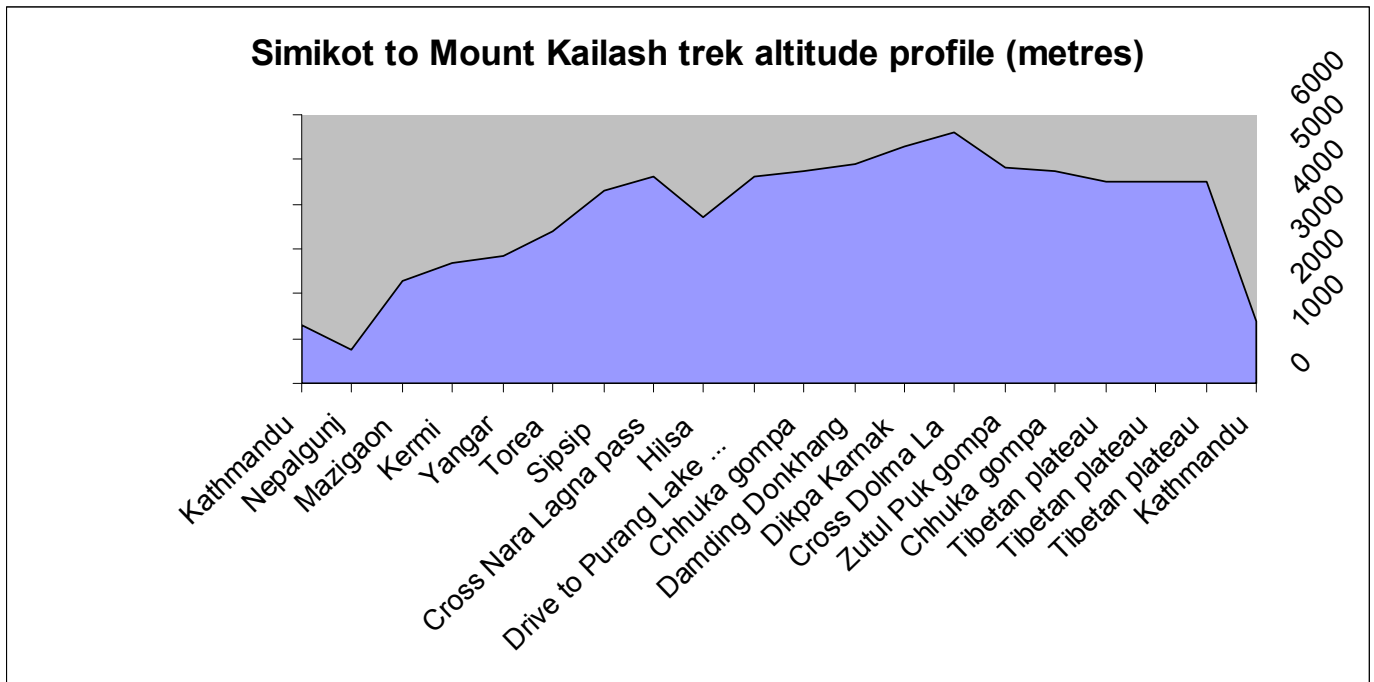




PRACTICAL INFORMATION

ALTITUDE AND ACCLIMATISATION

Our Simikot to Mount Kailash 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.

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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>

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. For our camping treks in Nepal we provide fresh coffee from our Bialetti Moka coffee machine. 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 -15°C.



CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

A list of suggested clothing and equipment for our Simikot to Kailash 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 pony. **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.

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



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 gumpa 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>

Altitude and acclimatisation information and advice

Going higher Oxygen, man and mountains by Charles Houston, MD

The High Altitude Medicine Handbook by Pollard and Murdoch

Medicine for mountaineering by James Wilkerson, MD

MAPS

Simikot to Kailash Manasarovar by Nepal Map Publisher 1:200,000 and 1:50,000
This map will be included in your welcome pack when you arrive in Nepal.

Kailas Manasarovar by Himalayan Maphouse Scale: 1:200,000



APPENDIX 1

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 baselayer for top & bottom (merino wool or synthetic).
- Fleece pants.
- Medium weight down jacket (eg. The North Face Nuptse jacket 700 fill)

Handwear:

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

**Headwear:**

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

Personal Equipment:

- Sleeping bag.
- Sleeping mat (eg. Thermarest). On trek we provide everyone with one foam mat however we recommend two layers for maximum insulation and comfort.
- 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).

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**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).



APPENDIX 2

INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER PROTECTION

In accordance with "The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992" all passengers booking with The Mountain Trekking Company Ltd ("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.

There is no requirement for Financial Protection of day trips, and none is provided. This insurance is only valid for packages booked that DO NOT include flights.

Consumer aware: Your booking is insured by IPP Ltd and its panel of insurers. This insurance is only valid for passengers who book and pay directly with/to The Mountain Company. If you have booked and/ or paid direct to a Travel Agent for a holiday with The Mountain Company please request proof of how the booking is secured as this will not be covered by IPP Ltd in this instance. For further information please go to www.ipplondon.co.uk

This Insurance has been arranged by International Passenger Protection Limited and underwritten by Insurers who are members of the Association of British Insurers & Lloyds Syndicates.

Claim procedures: download claim form from www.ipplondon.co.uk, any occurrence which may give rise to a claim should be advised within 14 days to: International Passenger Protection Limited, Claims Office, IPP House, 22-26 Station Road, West Wickham, Kent BR4 0PR, United Kingdom. Telephone: +44 (0) 208 7763752. Fax: +44 (0) 208 7763751.

In order to deal promptly with any claims hereunder it is essential that you retain all bills, receipts and other documents relating to your travel arrangements. Claims forms must be submitted to IPP within six months of date of insolvency they cannot consider or pay claims received after this date.