

# MANASLU CIRCUIT WITH TSUM VALLEY



Group at Larkya La pass on the Manaslu Circuit





## HIGHLIGHTS

- ) This is a geographically spectacular and culturally fascinating trek passing from the Gurung villages of the lower hills to the Tibetans of the upper Buri Gandaki.
- ) The mountain views are sensational including Himalchuli (7,893m), Shringi Himal (7,187m), Ngadichuli (7,871m) and of course Manaslu (8,163m).
- ) This trek includes a visit to Tsum Valley, this is one of Buddhism's sacred hidden valleys called "Beyul" with important ancient monasteries and remote villages.
- ) Larkya La at 5,213m is an impressive Himalayan pass to cross, it is a long day however would be a good objective for most hill walkers.
- ) Manaslu Circuit would appeal to anyone looking for a challenging trek in a remote region of Nepal. Tsum Valley was opened to foreigners in 2007 and has been visited by relatively few other trekkers.

## REASONS TO CHOOSE THE MOUNTAIN COMPANY FOR MANASLU CIRCUIT

- ) Our itinerary has been carefully designed to ensure sufficient acclimatisation as well as including acclimatisation days to maximise the chance of crossing the pass.
- ) The Mountain Company will receive bespoke weather forecasts for the Manaslu region from EverestWeather.com throughout the duration of this trek.
- ) Due to the recent construction of accommodation on Manaslu Circuit our groups now stay and eat their meals in the lodges. However we also bring along tents in case you prefer to sleep outside and the tents will be allocated on a twin share basis using our three person Western branded tents.
- ) We provide each porter with windproof jacket & trousers, walking boots and shelter as per IPPG Guidelines.



- ) We send a Thuraya satellite phone on all of our treks in Nepal. It is essential for your guide to have reliable communications with us for logistics, planning and group safety.
- ) Roland Hunter, owner and founder of The Mountain Company, has modified this itinerary based on his first-hand experience of Manaslu Circuit.

## TESTIMONIALS

"From the minute I had arrived in Kathmandu I felt that Roland and The Mountain Company had all bases covered. The trip was an amazing experience made all the better by the choice of leaders whose knowledge and enthusiasm for the country was infectious.

I wouldn't hesitate to recommend Roland and the Mountain Company to anyone wanting to trek in Nepal for the first time, or the second- I'm planning a return trip this year!" **Guy Massey (UK)**

"This was our fourth trek with The Mountain Company, and the best. To be so close to the mountains was very special. As before, the organisation was first class, with contingencies should anything untoward happen. Pre-trip discussions with Roland, and local support from Tulsi and his team were invaluable. A special thank you should go to our, fourth time, guide Lhakpa Sherpa. His knowledge, and ability to network, helped give us the best possible experience.

The Manaslu Circuit and, in particular, Larkya La pass was spectacular. The Tsum Valley was interesting for a number of reasons: the relatively untouched environment, the people and Home Stays. Also, the food was very good. What struck us was the lack of inhabitants, and even fewer trekkers. If you want to see the Tsum Valley, go soon before it becomes busy. And make sure that you go with The Mountain Company." **David Wright and Judy Lomas (UK)**



# MANASLU CIRCUIT WITH TSUM VALLEY

Total number of days	24 days
Grade & days trekking	Strenuous, 19 trekking days
Accommodation	3 nights hotel, 20 nights teahouse lodge
2019 price from Kathmandu	£2,295 (US\$2,995 or €2,615)
2020 price from Kathmandu	£2,295 (US\$2,995 or €2,615)
Minimum group size	2
Maximum group size	10
Dates	April 12 <sup>th</sup> to May 5 <sup>th</sup> 2019 ( <b>Easter: April 21<sup>st</sup></b> ) October 4 <sup>th</sup> to 27 <sup>th</sup> 2019 April 10 <sup>th</sup> to May 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2020 ( <b>Easter: April 12<sup>th</sup></b> ) October 2 <sup>nd</sup> to 25 <sup>th</sup> 2020



## THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- ) All internal transport and transfers including airport collections.
- ) One day sightseeing in Kathmandu with Nepalese cultural guide and private vehicle.
- ) Twin share room at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador in Kathmandu.
- ) Breakfast only in Kathmandu, all meals included while on trek. Trek meals include breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea and biscuits plus two course dinner (soup and main meal) plus up to two cups of hot drinks per meal.
- ) Lodge based accommodation on trek however we also bring along tents in case you prefer to sleep outside of the lodge. The tents will be allocated on a twin share basis using our three person Western branded tents.
- ) All trekking arrangements including permits and fees, trekking guide(s) and porter(s). **We provide one trekking guide for group size of two people and two guides for a group size of three people and three guides for group size of six people plus.**
- ) Bespoke weather forecasts for Manaslu region from EverestWeather.com throughout the duration of this trek.
- ) Manaslu trekking map given to you on arrival to Kathmandu.
- ) Rubberised luggage tags posted to you before departure.
- ) Full financial protection for all monies paid to us through our membership of Association of Bonded Travel Operators Trust (our ABTOT membership number is 5365) and having an Air Travel Organiser's Licence (our ATOL number is 10921).
- ) 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 Pre Trip Information" notes.



## THE FOLLOWING SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IS AVAILABLE:

Single room supplement	£160 (US\$200 or €175)
Single tent supplement	£125 (US\$160 or €140)

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.
- ) Travel & trekking insurance.
- ) 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 Pre Trip Information” notes).
- ) Other items not listed in “What is included”.

## PARTICIPANT SELECTION

The Mountain Company carefully selects and screens potential participants applying to join our groups to ensure the trip is an appropriate objective for you. We have a number of pre-trip questions asking information about your outdoor experience, training, experience, medical conditions and fitness. To access the pre-trip questions please send in your application by clicking on the “**Apply now**” **button** on the trek webpage. After review of your replies we might contact you by telephone or email for further information to aid our selection process.



Please ensure you have done your own research about Manaslu Circuit with Tsum trek by reading our pre trip documents (Trip Dossier, Trip Grading and Trip Reports published on TMC blog) to ensure you have a realistic idea of what to expect. Every trip organised by The Mountain Company has been graded based on four factors: daily walking times, altitude, terrain and remoteness.

## INTRODUCTION

Manaslu Circuit is one of the classic treks in Nepal around Manaslu the world's eighth highest mountain followed by crossing the Larkya La pass. This trek includes a visit to Tsum Valley, this is one of Buddhism's sacred hidden valleys called "Beyul" with important ancient monasteries and remote villages. Tsum valley was opened for trekkers in 2007 therefore is a new place to explore and well worth visiting if you have the time.

This trek would appeal to anyone who is looking for a challenging trek in a remote region of the Nepal Himalaya. The trail passes through a geographically spectacular and culturally fascinating area with scenery similar to the classic Annapurna Circuit although the trails are not as popular with trekking groups.

The trek starts at Soti Khola and passes through bamboo forests and Gurung villages in the narrow Buri Gandaki gorge. After Lho village we enter the Nupri region inhabited by Tibetan immigrants where you will see colourful prayer flags, mani walls and monasteries along the way.

After Samdo village we start the approach towards the Larkya La pass, crossing this high Himalayan pass is a challenging day although would be a good objective for a fit hill walker with no previous mountaineering experience. The view from the Larkya La is superb where we will see Himachuli, Manaslu, Cheo Himal and Himlung Himal mountains.



## 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.**

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. **Overnight at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador (Meals: none).**

### **Day 2. Sightseeing in Kathmandu.**

This is a one day guided sightseeing tour of the Kathmandu Valley visiting three out of the seven World Heritage Sites. You will start off by visiting Patan Durbar Square then drive to the Buddhist stupa at Boudhanath followed by the last stop of the day at the Hindu shrine of Pashupatinath. The tour is likely to finish around 4pm and the rest of the day is free to further explore Kathmandu as well as to pack your bags for the trek starting tomorrow morning. You can leave a bag at the hotel with items not needed on trek.

Three major towns are located in the valley, Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur, each having a great artistic and architectural tradition. Kathmandu is the capital and the largest city in the country. Patan, the second largest is separated from Kathmandu by a river. Bhaktapur, the third largest, is towards the eastern end of the valley and its relative isolation is reflected in its slower pace and more distinctly mediaeval atmosphere.

In the Valley the landscape is dramatically sculpted by the contours of the paddy fields. The towns and villages are alive with the colours of farm produce, ranging from pyramids of golden grain to the vivid reds of chilli peppers laid out on mats to dry in the sun. In the streets and towns there is a constant bustle of activity, especially in the bazaars and markets where the farmers sell their vegetables and fruit. **Overnight at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador (Meals: B).**





**Day 3. Drive to Soti Khola (700m)- 8 to 9 hours driving. Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

We leave Kathmandu early in the morning by private bus. It is a scenic drive with several picturesque gorges and occasional glimpses of mountain peaks. After exiting the Kathmandu valley we drive along the Pokhara road following Trishuli River until we turn off to heading north following Buri Gandaki to Arughat Bazaar. After Dhading Besi the road is not sealed so it is likely to be quite dusty in the bus so it is a good idea to bring a buff or scarf along with you.

The road has recently been built beyond Arughat so these days we continue the drive in the bus or change to local jeeps for the drive to Soti Khola. This village is a better trailhead than Arughat and it saves a day walking along the dusty road.

**Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 4. Trek to Macha Khola (930m)- 6 hours walking.**

Our route heads northwards following the Buri Gandaki river passing through terraced fields and forests with troops of monkeys. After Soti Khola the trail ascends on the valley sides and then descends later to walk along the river. There is an ascent to the village of Macha Khola.

During the months of both April and October it will very hot and humid with temperatures often more than 30 Degrees Celsius for the first three days of the trek. These dates have been chosen for optimal conditions in crossing the high passes however please be aware of the hot start to the trek. It is important to bring plenty of water, wear a sun hat and apply sun cream. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 5. Trek to Jagat (1,440m)- 6 to 8 hours walking.**

You follow the Buri Gandaki river climbing up and down a number of ridges passing through the villages of Khorlabesi and Tatopani. After crossing the bridge over to east bank of Buri Gandaki you continue through forest to Dobhan. Further along you cross the bridge over Yaru khola (river) then shortly after cross another bridge over Buri Gandaki over to Jagat village. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**



**Day 6. Trek to Lokpa in Tsum Valley (2,240m)- 6 hours walking.**

After Jagat you cross a bridge over Dudh Pokhari khola (river) then pass through the villages of Salleri and Sirdibas. The trail then descends to cross the bridge over Buri Gandaki to the larger village of Philim. At Philim there is a check point to enter Tsum Valley where our permits will be reviewed. We continue onwards to stay at Lokpa located above the confluence of Buddhi Gandaki and the Siyar khola that flows from Tsum valley. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 7. Trek to Chumling in Tsum Valley (2,386m)- 4 to 5 hours walking.**

You walk along the south bank of Siyar khola on an undulating path through forest crossing bridges over tributaries, Lungwa khola and Sarli khola before crossing over a bridge over Siyar khola to the north bank. After this bridge there is a climb up to Chumling where you stay for the night. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 8. Trek to Chhokang Paro in Tsum Valley (3,031m )- 5 to 6 hours walking.**

The trail stays in north bank of Siyar khola however the trail is undulating with descents to cross bridges of the tributary rivers of Udilu khola, Samatikring khola and Sarpu khola. You walk through the village of Gho then uphill to the village of Chhokang Paro. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 9. Trek to Nile in Tsum Valley (3,360m)- 4 to 5 hours walking. Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

The trail continues along the northside of Siyar khola where the valley is now much broader than the last few days walking. You walk through the villages of Phurbe and Pangdun before continuing to Nile where we stay for the night. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 10. Trek to Mu Gompa in Tsum Valley (3,700m)- 3 hours walking.** You follow the trail up to Mu Gompa and after a visit to the monastery there are options to walk higher to get views of the valley. Mu Gompa was established by Drupa Rinpoche, a Bhutanese lama who meditated in the caves close to the current location of the monastery. Mu Gompa is at an altitude of 3,700m located in position surrounded by high mountains. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**



**Day 11. Trek to Rachen nunnery in Tsum Valley (3,240m)- 4 hours walking. Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

In the morning of you can walk further up the valley to the villages of Kalung and Bhajyo then in afternoon you will descend to Rachen Gompa. This is a nunnery/monastery and well worth visiting to Buddhist thanka murals. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 12. Trek to Chumling in Tsum Valley (2,386m)- 7 hours walking. Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

We descend down the same trail to Chumling village. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 13. Trek to Deng (1,860m)- 7 to 8 hours walking. Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

From Chumling we descend to Lokpa village and then cross the bridge over Buri Gandaki to join the main Manaslu Circuit trail up to Deng village. You enter Deng through a Buddhist stone arch known as a Kani. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 14. Trek to Namrung (2,540m)- 7 hours walking.**

A short distance out of Deng, the trail crosses back over the Buri Gandaki onto what is now its north bank near Rana. From the bridge the trail climbs a little before heading west on level ground and passing a large waterfall. Once over a wooden bridge, the trail contours up and out of the canyon and climbs high above the river before dropping into the Shringi Khola Valley. After the suspension bridge over the Shringi Khola there is a steep climb and the trail traverses along the Buri Gandaki as it flows between vertical walls of rock.

After a few more ups and downs through forests, the trail turns a corner and arrives at Ghap through an intricate kani with well-preserved paintings and elegant mani wall. After leaving Ghap, you pass more mani walls on the southern side of the river before heading into some woods. The trail climbs along the river, past a waterfall and continues through deep fir and rhododendron. The trail makes a long climb through bamboo and rhododendron and finally enters Namrung through another stone archway. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**



### **Day 15. Trek to Samagaon (3,450m)- 7 hours walking.**

Shortly after leaving Namrung we arrive to Banjam with its wide fields. Soon after Banjam the trail steepens as we walk up to the next village of Lihi with a fine view of Ganesh Himal. A further hour along the trail we arrive to Sho and then followed by another hour to Lho. From this village there are fine views of Manaslu and the Kutang Himal.

After leaving Lho the next village is Shyala located on a plateau then you cross a bridge over Numla khola. After crossing a boulder field, the trail emerges onto the extensive pastures and fields near Samagaon village. There is a lot to explore, it is a little piece of Tibet with many gompas and a traditional Tibetan village. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

### **Day 16. Day walk from Samagaon (3,450m).**

We spend two nights at Samagaon to help acclimatisation. There is a good day walk with views of Manaslu and Peak 29. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

### **Day 17. Trek to Samdo (3,860m)- 3 hours walking.**

Follow the Buri Gandaki northwards to a bridge over a side stream where the trail forks: the left leading towards the Manaslu Base Camp, the other passing several mani walls heads for the Larkya La. The valley widens along an easy trail past juniper and birch forest to the stone huts at Kermo Kharka, then drops off a shelf to cross a wooden bridge and climbing between a fork in the river to a promontory. From this vantage point, one can see the white stone kani marking the entrance to Samdo. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

### **Day 18. Day walk from Samdo (3,860m).**

We spend two nights at Samdo to help acclimatisation. There is a good day walk towards Gya La which is the trading pass with Tibet. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

### **Day 19. Trek to Larkya Phedi (4,460m)- 3 to 4 hours walking.**

Today we start the ascent to the pass by descending through fields to an old mani wall and stone arch before dropping to the river and crossing on a wooden bridge. This place shows up on maps as the mythical Larka Bazaar, which used to be a flourishing market, but there is nothing remaining there now.



Another mani wall marks the beginning of ascent to the pass where the trail starts climbing through tundra and juniper; the huge Larkya Glacier coming from Manaslu can be seen from here. Stay on the ridge to the right to find a trail that crosses over the top of two ravines. The trail grows steeper, climbing up the side of a gorge to a viewpoint at the edge of a huge gorge at 4000m. Nearing the Larkya Glacier, we reach Larkya Phedi, where there is a small lodge, built to serve travellers crossing the Larkya La which lies now just ahead. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 20. Cross the Larkya La (5,135m), trek to Bimtang (3,590m)- 7 to 8 hours walking.**

The trail starts as a long gentle climb across moraine, it descends a little to a lake and then becomes rough and indistinct as it crosses to the south of steep grassy slopes. The trail stays on the moraine to a ridge marked by two cairns, from here the prayer flags marking the pass are visible. Descend to the four frozen lakes then make the final steep climb to the pass.

On the descent from the pass the trail follows the top of the moraine to the west and makes a set of steep, rough switchbacks as it crosses the moraine then descends more gently on loose gravel to another grassy moraine at 4,450m. The conditions for crossing the pass vary depending on time of year however in case it is icy we should have micro crampons. Please take a look at our kit list in the Appendix.

The trail now becomes easier to follow and reaches a small meadow and spring at 4,080m. The valley becomes wider as the trails heads down to a large meadow, past a mani wall and a small rest house that marks Bimthang at 3,590m. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 21. Trek to Dharapani (1,860m)- 7 to 8 hours walking.**

The trail drops to a glacial stream, the headwaters of the Dudh Khola, and crosses a wooden bridge and descends into pine and rhododendron forest to Hompuk at 3,430m. The trail improves as it descends to a fork in the river and then follows the river to a stable at 3030m. Not far from here you reach Karche's fenced fields, then cross a landslide before making a steep climb to a ridge decorated with prayer flags. It makes a descent to the river bank at Gho.



The trail continues through fields and intermittent stands of rhododendron and oak to arrive at Tilje, a large Gurung village. Exit the village through a stone arch, cross the Dudh Khola and follow along its embankment descending through scrub forest. The walls of the Marsyangdi Valley loom larger and finally the houses of Dharapani appear in the distance. Pass through Thonje via a wooden bridge and through a chorten-shaped arch, and Dharapani lies across a long suspension bridge over the Marsyangdi. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 22. Trek to Jagat (1,430m)- 6 hours walking.**

From Dharapani you are now on the more popular Annapurna Circuit and the trail now follows this classic trek in reverse as you pass through the steepest part of the Marsyangdi gorge. We follow Natural Annapurna Trekking Trails (NATT) on the west bank of Kali Gandaki away from the road on the other side of the valley. Our trek ends in Jagat as it is now possible to take jeeps from this village along the road to Besisahar. **Overnight lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 23. Jeeps to Besisahar then by private bus to Kathmandu.**

From Jagat we take jeeps along the road to Besisahar then switch vehicles to our private bus sent from Kathmandu to collect you. You will get back to Kathmandu in later afternoon. **Overnight at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador (Meals: B).**

**Day 24. Fly back home.**

Transfer to Kathmandu airport for the flight back home. End of trip.



# YOUR COMPLETE FINANCIAL PROTECTION

The Mountain Trekking Company Ltd (trading as The Mountain Company) is a fully licensed and bonded tour operator. For flight inclusive packages sold to UK residents these will be covered by our Air Travel Organisers Licence (our ATOL number is 10921). For packages that do not include flights and for packages sold to customers outside of the UK your financial protection is covered by our membership of Association of Bonded Travel Organisers' Trust ("ABTOT"). Our ABTOT membership number is 5365.



Our membership of these organisations means that you can book with us in complete confidence that all monies paid to us for trips are protected.

## THREAT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

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. The ability to work in team is an important aspect of all of our trips.

As a part of our planning process we have performed a detailed threat and risk assessment for our Manaslu Circuit trek. It is worth pointing out all of our trips have a certain degree of risk, this is of course part of the attraction of adventure travel and why so many people choose to join this type of holiday. However by identifying

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the potential hazards on Manaslu Circuit we can assess the level of risk and implement control measures to reduce this happening.

Our full threat and risk assessment for Manaslu Circuit is available to clients on request. For your information we have listed below a summary of the significant risks and hazards identified by us:

- ) Falls and trips resulting in physical injury eg. slipping on ice or falling off the path.
- ) Altitude illness including but not limited to AMS, HACE and HAPE.
- ) Getting lost or becoming separated from group eg. crossing Larkya La pass in whiteout.
- ) Severe bad weather and conditions when camping.
- ) Climatic injuries (dehydration, sun burn, heat exhaustion, hypothermia or heat stroke). Please note during the months of April and and October it will very hot and humid with temperatures often more than 30 Degrees Celsius for the first three days of the trek.
- ) Crossing a river with no bridge resulting in drowning and/ or a fall.
- ) Rock fall and landslides.
- ) Snow and ice avalanches eg crossing Larkya La pass.
- ) Lightning strike.
- ) Wildlife, pack animals (eg. donkeys or horses) or stray dogs. Pack animals have been known to knock people off the path. Dogs can attack and bite, we advise you discuss rabies vaccination with your doctor.
- ) Earthquake.
- ) Risk of fire in the hotel or lodge.
- ) Endemic local diseases. We advise you discuss vaccinations with your doctor before departure.
- ) Physiological injury such as heart attack, appendicitis, hernia, toothache etc. in a remote area.





) Road traffic accident. We use a private bus from Kathmandu to Arughat and back from Besisahar to back to Kathmandu. Due to local rules we cannot take drive our bus to Soti Khola and Jagat so it is usually necessary to use local jeeps for these sections of road.

) Contaminated food and/ or water.

This trip visits a remote area where you are away from normal emergency services and medical facilities. In case of a serious injury requiring hospitalisation 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.

## THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT TOUR OPERATORS (“AITO”)

The Mountain Company is a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) and we have agreed to abide by the terms of the AITO Quality Charter.

AITO is the Association for independent and specialist holiday companies. Our member companies, usually owner-managed, strive to create overseas holidays with high levels of professionalism and a shared concern for quality and personal service. The Association encourages the highest standards in all aspects of tour operating. For more information please take a look at <http://www.aito.com/>





# 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 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.

In 2017 the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) launched Project PROTECT in recognition of the important role that destinations play in the future of the travel industry. The aim of this project is to encourage sustainable tourism and to nurture the destinations for tomorrow's travellers. The PROTECT acronym stands for People / Resources / Outreach / Tourism / Environment / Conservation / Tomorrow.

This project is led by Professor Xavier Font of the University of Surrey and each AITO member has to publish an annual pledge and report back at the end of the year on how they got along. To see The Mountain Company's Project PROTECT pledges for 2018 and 2017, please take a look at our [Sustainable Tourism page on AITO website](#).



We work closely with the International Porter Protection Group and abide by their five guidelines for porter protection, their website is at [www.ippg.net](http://www.ippg.net). We also have partnered with Kathmandu Environmental Education Project in Nepal, their website is at [www.keepnepal.org](http://www.keepnepal.org)



# PRACTICAL INFORMATION

## ALTITUDE AND ACCLIMATISATION

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!
- ) Drinks 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:

Please remember even the fittest and healthiest person can develop one of the altitude illnesses: AMS (acute mountain sickness), HACE (high altitude cerebral edema) and/ or HAPE (high altitude pulmonary edema). The symptoms of these illnesses are listed below, if any of these occur when you are on trek please immediately tell your guide.

### **Symptoms of AMS:**

- ) Tiredness
- ) Dizziness
- ) Nausea or if severe, vomiting
- ) Poor sleep

### **Symptoms of HACE:**

- ) Usually preceded by AMS
- ) Like “Severe AMS” also with severe headache unresponsive to painkillers; confusion and physical clumsiness (ataxia).



## Symptoms of HAPE:

- ) Fluid in the lungs: cough, tiredness, breathlessness out of proportion to exercise especially at rest and worse when lying flat.
- ) Often symptoms start later (at night or after 24 to 48 hours at new altitude).
- ) Often occurs without AMS (often no headache)
- ) But you can have AMS and HACE too.

If you have symptoms of altitude illness (AMS, HACE or HAPE) you must not ascend in altitude. If you have HACE or HAPE you must descend to nearest health post (if available) or seek medical help.

If you have only mild symptoms of AMS you should rest, drink fluids, try to eat, keep warm. If symptoms go away then you can go up. If symptoms get worse you have to descend in altitude escorted by one of our guides (someone with altitude illness must never descend alone).

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

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>

## ACCOMMODATION IN KATHMANDU

For our Manaslu treks we use several hotels in Kathmandu depending on availability. They are as follows:

**Hotel Tibet** is located in Lazimpat next to the Radisson. Hotel Tibet is our usual hotel for our standard trips in Nepal as our clients enjoy staying at this property due to its good location, comfortable rooms and high level of service. There is a garden

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terrace next to the restaurant on the ground floor and the roof terrace with the Yeti Bar overlooking the city. For more information on Hotel Tibet please take a look at their website <http://www.hotel-tibet.com.np/>

**Hotel Ambassador** is located in Lazimpat not far from Hotel Tibet and Manaslu. This hotel was rebuilt and opened in Spring 2017 with well-appointed rooms including both King size and twin beds, complimentary wifi, tea & coffee, iron & board, combined bath & shower. The rooms are a good size at 30m<sup>2</sup> and are well decorated with original art. The rooms have air conditioning and are sound proofed for quiet nights rest. For more information on Hotel Ambassador please take a look at their website: <http://www.ambassadornepal.com/>

There are store rooms at all of these hotels where you can leave luggage not required while on trek. There is also a security safe at these hotels for storage of valuables.

## FOOD

In Kathmandu there is a wide range of excellent restaurants, please read our Nepal Pre Trip information document for our recommendations. Breakfast is provided each morning by the hotel.

While on the trek, the lodges provide good quality food in sufficient quantities. Trek meals include breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea and biscuits plus two course dinner (soup and main meal) plus up to two cups of hot drinks per meal.

## 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 the Manaslu Circuit with Tsum trek has been included in 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. Typically the backpack would be 30 to 40 litres in size.

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. Please read our Nepal Pre Trip information document for more details about getting your Nepal visa.



## 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 including high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines. Please get in contact with us if you would like to see the list of medicines contained in our medical kits.

## FLIGHTS

The Mountain Company does not book international flights for our holidays. Instead all package prices are Land Only with services starting from arrival to the destination country.

If you would like help arranging flights then we suggest you contact our partner travel agent, StudentUniverse (ATOL registered) a specialist division of the Flight Centre Travel Group ---> [Get an online quote](#)

## INSURANCE

The Mountain Company does not book international flights for our holidays. Instead all package prices are Land Only with services starting from arrival to the destination country.

If you would like help arranging flights then we suggest you contact our partner travel agent, StudentUniverse (ATOL registered) a specialist division of the Flight Centre Travel Group ---> [Get an online quote](#)

## 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.

Please carefully check your insurers' Terms and Conditions in particular you should make sure the following is covered: 1) Activity (i.e touring, trekking or mountaineering) 2) Maximum altitude reached on trek 3) Helicopter evacuation in an emergency.

It is important for you to understand that ultimately the burden of any expense incurred in evacuation and repatriation procedures will be borne by you and that it is your responsibility to pay any costs incurred in respect of any evacuation or for medical treatment. You should be fully aware of the implications involved in arranging your own travel insurance and understand the limitations and exclusions of your policy.

You should be aware that under certain circumstances, The Mountain Company leader (or our local agent, if no western leader) might instigate rescue proceedings via helicopter (or any other means necessary) in situations of medical emergency without first contacting your insurance company for their approval.

The Mountain Company has arranged travel and trekking insurance for European Union residents with the specialist insurance broker **Campbell Irvine**. Their insurance policy will cover you for most of the trips in our portfolio. However if your trek is classified or graded by The Mountain Company as "**Strenuous**" or "**Challenging**" then you must make sure you select this option when obtaining an online quote for your insurance. Campbell Irvine will not provide insurance cover for any trips classified as "**Mountaineering**".

**CAMPBELL IRVINE**  
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE

To apply for an online quote through [Campbell Irvine's Direct Travel Insurance](#) website. Should you have any questions regarding the terms and conditions of cover please contact Campbell Irvine on 0207 938 1734 or email [info@campbellirvine.com](mailto:info@campbellirvine.com)





We have [listed on TMC website a comprehensive list of specialist adventure travel insurers](#) that our trekkers from UK, EU and Internationally based have used in the past. Please carefully check their Terms & Conditions prior to purchase. These companies are not necessarily recommended by us so it is your responsibility to ensure you have appropriate coverage.

## 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

Manaslu: A Trekker's Guide by Kev Reynolds

Annapurna south face by Chris Bonnington

Himalayan Pilgrimage by David Snellgrove

Annapurna by Maurice Herzog

True Summit: What Really Happened on the Legendary Ascent on Annapurna by David Roberts

The Ascent of Rum Doodle by WE Bowman

A Nepalese Journey: The Essence of the Annapurna Circuit (Mountain Photography) by Andrew Stevenson

## MAPS

Manaslu High Route by Himalayan Maphouse Scale: 1:110,000 **This map will be included in your welcome pack when you arrive in Nepal.**

National Geographic Annapurna Trekking 1:135,000

Nepal Trekking Map Himalayan Maphouse Scale: 1:900,000



# APPENDIX

## CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT LIST FOR MANASLU CIRCUIT WITH TSUM

For the safety of everyone in the group and to help ensure a successful trek, you are required to have the following items in our clothing and equipment list tailored for Manaslu Circuit with Tsum trek.

As a reminder, the weather on this trek will vary season to season and day to day as you ascend to higher elevations. During the first couple of days on Manaslu Circuit with Tsum trek you are likely to experience quite warm conditions and you will experience the coldest temperatures at Larkya Phedi at an altitude of 4,460m where overnight lows can get down to around -12°C.

### **Footwear:**

- ) Walking boots. A pair of water repellent boots with ankle support.
- ) Walking socks.
- ) Trainers/sneakers or sandals. Can be used in camp/lodge in the evenings.

### **Trekking gear for crossing the passes:**

- ) Two trekking poles (Black Diamond poles with “Flick Lock” are best).
- ) YakTrax XTR. These are helpful for descending passes if snowy and icy conditions, for more information please take a look at:  
<https://www.yaktrax.com/product/xtr>
- ) Gaiters. A pair used to keep boots dry if walking through deep snow on passes.

### **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.

**Handwear:**

- ) Fleece gloves.
- ) Warms mittens and/or gloves.

**Headwear:**

- ) Wool or fleece hat.
- ) Sun hat.
- ) Bandana or scarf.
- ) Headtorch. Bring extra batteries.
- ) Sunglasses. The lenses need to be Category 4 rated and should have side protection or wraparound design to prevent light getting through to your eyes that could cause sun blindness.

**Personal Equipment:**

- ) Sleeping bag. Maximum overnight lows at Larkya Phedi will be around -12 Celsius. *Note: it is possible to rent a bag in Kathmandu from Shonas Rental.*
- ) Fleece or silk liner for your sleeping bag. A liner protects your sleeping bag from getting dirty and helps by adding extra insulation to keep you warm at night.
- ) Sleeping mat (eg. Thermarest). On trek we provide everyone with one foam mat however we recommend two layers for maximum insulation and comfort.
- ) Daypack. Recommended size is 30 litres or larger as you need to have enough space to carry water bottles, camera, snacks and extra clothing as well as micro



crampons and poles for day crossing the high pass. It is also a good idea to bring a rain cover to keep the contents dry.

- ) Stuff sacks for keeping your gear dry and organised. Or even better are fold-drybags such as from Exped.
- ) 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.
- ) 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).
- ) Antibiotics. Although we carry antibiotics for the team, it is advisable to bring some of your own. We recommend that you visit your doctor and request one set of antibiotics to treat stomach infection and one for upper respiratory tract infection.