

# Kingdom of Mustang Trek, Nepal

The classic trek to Lo Manthang using comfortable Tibetan-style lodges throughout.



## Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

## Holiday overview

Style	Trek
Accommodation	Hotels, Lodges
Grade	Vigorous
Duration	19 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 10 days
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Nepalese Sherpa, Mustang
Land only	Joining in Kathmandu, Nepal
Max altitude	4,301m/14,111ft, Chogo La Pass, Day 10

**Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available**



Watch related videos online: [Kingdom of Mustang Trek](#)

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# Departures

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## Group departures

### 2024 Dates:

Thu 30 May - Mon 17 Jun

Thu 12 Sep - Mon 30 Sep

### Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Please be aware that the option of a single room is not available in the lodges on trek, only in the hotels in Kathmandu and Pokhara. Please see the 'Your Accommodation' section for further information.

### Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

### No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

### Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

### Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

### Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday. If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

## Your guide

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Our Sherpas have been leading treks in Mustang for many years. In fact, we have been taking groups there every year since 1994 (with the exception of the years of Maoist rebellion). We have used the same group of Sherpas for our Mustang treks in all that time. They are extremely knowledgeable about the culture, history, geology, flora and fauna of the Mustang region.

## Your trip highlights

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- Visit a small Buddhist kingdom that until relatively recently was closed to the outside world.
- Attractive Tibetan-style villages with a strong, well preserved Tibetan culture and intriguing long-abandoned cliff dwellings and ancient cave monasteries.
- A dramatic desert landscape with incredible ‘organ-pipe’ cliffs, set against a backdrop of the mighty snow-capped Himalaya.
- While on trek stay in tea houses, small hotels and charming lodges
- Stay in 4\* hotels in Kathmandu and Pokhara

## At a glance itinerary

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Days 1-2	Depart UK, arrive Kathmandu
Day 3	Fly to Pokhara
Day 4	Fly to Jomsom, Drive to Kagbeni
Days 5-10	Trekking to Lo Manthang up the western side of the Kali Gandaki Valley.
Day 11	At leisure in Lo Manthang or visit villages north of Lo Manthang.
Days 12- 14	Trek down a different route on the western side of the valley to Chussang
Day 15	Drive to Jomsom
Day 16	Fly to Kathmandu via Pokhara
Days 17-19	At leisure in Kathmandu and fly home.

## Trip summary

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The remote and mysterious region of Mustang is situated in the far north of Nepal, beyond the mountain giants of Dhaulagiri and Annapurna, and extending into the highlands of Tibet. It is a vast, high, arid valley characterised by eroded canyons and colourful stratified rock formations with a barren, desert-like appearance fringed by snow-capped peaks. Lying in the rain shadow of the Himalaya it is an ideal region to explore in the summer, outside of the normal Nepal trekking season.

The ancient and 'Forbidden Kingdom of Mustang' has long been shrouded in mystery. Protecting its authentic Tibetan culture from outside influences, Mustang remained closed for many years to foreigners until it finally opened its doors in 1992. Trekkers though were not allowed in until 1994 and we were one of the first British trekking companies to take people there in that year.

Having taken the sensational flight from Pokhara up the 'deepest gorge in the world' which lies between Mt Annapurna and Mt Dhaulagiri, you land at the small town of Jomsom. Already the scenery and atmosphere is Tibetan-like. From Jomsom you drive in 4x4s up dry river beds and through rivers to the village of Kagbeni, the gateway to Mustang. The next six days is a trek through astounding gorges, crossing prayer-flagged passes, and visiting holy caves, villages with monasteries and fortresses and seeing the unbelievable multi coloured cliff formations. You are now truly inside the Kingdom of Lo, hemmed in on the west and east by snow-capped Himalayan peaks, and closed to the north by a range of smaller mountains marking the Tibetan border. Finally you cross the Choge La Pass, 4,301m/ 14,111ft, and drop down to the 'Plain of Prayers' where you come to the only square walled city in the Himalaya, Lo Manthang.

The walled city of Lo Manthang is one of the undoubted highlights of the trek and you will have time to wander the enticing streets, explore its impressive temples and possibly visit the King's Palace where you may even get an audience with the current 'king', as many of our previous groups have done.

For the return you take a different route to visit the second most important township, Tsarang, and a string of other fabulous villages with huge chortens, flat-topped roofs and white-washed walls.

Finally, you end your trek at Chussang and take the short jeep ride back to Jomsom. Here you can reflect on a superb cultural and scenic experience, unlike any other in Nepal

### **The History of Mustang**

Mustang is the old kingdom of Lo. The official capital of the Mustang district is Jomsom, but the real Tibetan-style district lies north of Kagbeni and is usually referred to as Upper Mustang. The real capital, Lo Manthang, where the son of the late King lives, is a fantastic square-walled town sitting on the 'Plain of Prayers'.

Naturally, most of the history is now a matter of legend rather than recorded fact, but it seems clear that Lo was once part of Ngari, part of Tibet and a rather loose collection of feudal domains. It was incorporated into the Tibetan Empire under the most famous of the Tibetan Kings, Songtseng Gampo. It was an important means of crossing the Himalaya from Tibet to Nepal and many of the old salt caravans passed through Mustang. By the 14th Century much of Ngari became part of the Malla Empire, whose capital was Sinja in western Nepal. Really, it became an independent kingdom in its own right, under the rule of Ame Pal, the founder King of Lo in 1380. The present royal family can trace its history 25 generations back to Ame Pal and the city of Lo Manthang, which you will visit, was the centre of their power.

Explorers such as Professor David Snellgrove and the Italian scholar Guiseppi Tucci and Michel Peissel visited Mustang in the 1950s and it was largely their tales of a Tibetan-like arid region locked off from the outside world that fuelled interest in the area.

# Your trip itinerary

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## Day 1: Depart London.

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Depart London on your overnight flight to Kathmandu.

**Overnight: In flight**

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## Day 2: Arrive Kathmandu. Group transfer to hotel.

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You will be met on arrival at the airport and transferred to your hotel. You may choose to eat here tonight or venture out into Thamel with its many bars and restaurants.

**Overnight: Hotel Shanker or Similar, Kathmandu**

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## Day 3: Fly to Pokhara. Transfer to hotel. Time at leisure.

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This morning you will take the short morning flight to Pokhara, Nepal's second city. This exciting flight passes over the terraced Himalayan foothills, with views of the main range to the north. Overlooked by the stunning spire of Machhapuchare, 'Fishtail Peak', the town of Pokhara is the start point for treks to the Annapurna region, Mustang, Dhaulagiri and Manaslu. On arrival you will transfer to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure. Pokhara's bustling lakeside with cafe, shops etc is just a short walk from the hotel.

**Overnight: Barahi Hotel or Similar, Pokhara (Meals: B)**

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## Day 4: Fly to Jomsom, 2,743m/9,000ft - ½ hour flight. Drive to Kagbeni, 2,896m/9,500ft - 1½ hours drive.

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You take the 20-minute early morning flight, usually around 7am. You will get close-up views from your small aircraft of the Annapurna range, Dhaulagiri and nearby satellites. It is a sensational flight! On arrival you will be met at the tiny airstrip by your Sherpa crew. After some initial preparation of loads and a cup of tea, you drive the short distance to Kagbeni on the jeep road through dry river beds, and wide streams.

Upon reaching Kagbeni, a very pretty Tibetan-style village, with its narrow alleyways and tunnels, irrigation canals, green fields of wheat and barley and a large red gumpa (monastery), there is a taste of scenes to come in Upper Mustang. About 50 families live here, most of them traders who represent the link in the chain between modern Nepal and the 'Tibetan' peoples of Mustang.



At the northern end of the village there is a sign saying 'Restricted area, tourists please do not go beyond this point'. Here, tomorrow, you will complete your paperwork formalities for you to enter this long-prohibited region of Nepal. Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) has set up a very interesting information post here with displays of Mustang artefacts and photos. Look out for the excellent coffee shop very near the ACAP office.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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## Day 5: Drive to Tangbe, 2,926m/9,600ft. Trek to Tetang and on to Chele, 3050m/10,007ft - 4 hours trek.

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To avoid the unpleasant experience of walking on the road you drive to Tangbe, 2,926m/9,600ft, a stunning village with the remains of an old castle, narrow alley ways, ochre coloured chortens and an archery ground, and here are also the first black, white and red chortens that typify Upper Mustang.

You then take the path leading inland to the village of Tetang, again well worth exploring, before crossing the river and following the Nari Khola down to Chussang village, at the confluence of the Narshang Khola and the Khali Kandaki. Nilgiri Peak continues to dominate the southern skyline. There are three separate parts to this village and some broken castle walls on the surrounding cliffs. Across the river from Chussang are spectacular red organ-pipe eroded cliffs above the mouth of some inaccessible caves.

The five villages of this area, Chele, Gyakar, Chussang, Tangbe and Tetang are home to a culturally unified group of people, closely related to the Manangis, rather than the true Lobas.

There is a distinct change here, not only in topography, but there is a world of difference also in the culture, lifestyle and people. Settlements are more scattered, smaller and more basic. The people of Lo or Mustang do practice agriculture, but because of the lack of rain and fertile soil, cultivation is in sheltered plots of land creating a landscape of patterned brown, with scattered patterns of shaded greens.

Continuing north, this time unavoidably on the jeep road, you reach a huge red chunk of conglomerate that has fallen from the cliffs above forming a tunnel through which the river flows. A steel bridge spans the river just in front of the tunnel and north of here the Kali Gandaki becomes impassable on foot, although locals sometimes travel this route on horseback, through a steep, narrow canyon. There are many caves here high on the fluted red cliffs above. Climbing 100m/328ft to the village of Chele, you stay in a simple but characterful lodge at the upper end of the village. Most of the houses now have sheep horns above their doorways and ghost traps. Watch out also for the ferocious Tibetan mastiffs that many of the local people keep.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 6: Trek to Samar, 3,660m/11,811ft, via Ghyakar and Kyuten - 5 hours trek.**

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Climbing from Chele after breakfast you come to a place where you can see the village of Gyakar across a huge canyon. Here there is a very impressive suspension bridge which you cross and a short climb brings you to fields of barley topped by a wood of large trees. There is no shortage of water here. Then you arrive at the entrance gateway and tunnels under houses that lead to the small square of Gyakar which boasts a single tap and a washing place.

Leaving the village you go gently up through odd looking bushy plants and dog roses. It becomes drier and more arid. Continuing up you come to a big gulch and drop down to a stream and then up into a narrow defile. From the exit of the defile it is a long contour round to the village of Samar. As you walk up from Gyakar look across to your right and you will see the old cliff path that used to be the main path from Chele to Samar. Some people do still use it apparently.

Samar sits in a grove of poplar trees and is a major stopping place for the mule caravans coming from Tibet.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 7: Trek to Syangboche, 3,770m/12,369ft, with visit to holy cave of Rangchung - 5 hours trek.**

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From Samar you drop steeply down into a box canyon and up the other side. Then into another box canyon with an enchanting path that zig zags up and out of that canyon. Next is a long steepish climb to a pass which is about 3 hours from Samar.

From the pass you start the long descent into the stupendous gorge. Absolutely jaw dropping! Down and down you go into a seemingly bottomless world, passing huge, vertical, eroded, red cliffs.

Eventually you come to a stream and a bridge and here you turn left to visit the holy cave of Rangchung - approximately 40 minute round trip from the stream crossing. Guru Rimpoche is said to have meditated here on his way to Tibet and the cave contains many sacred relics and statues that 'grow'.



Leaving the bridge, it is up and up and up, out of the bowels of the earth to reach the four house hamlet of Syangboche. The Dhaulagiri Hotel is a very pleasant lodge for the night.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 8: Trek to Ghami, 3,520m/11,549ft - 6 hours trek.**

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Leaving Syangboche it is 15 minutes uphill to the large coloured chorten that marks the Syangboche La, 3,850m/12,631ft, from where there are fabulous views over to the east. Traversing on from here you come to a descending cliff path with a stream at the bottom, half an hour from the chorten. It is only 10 minutes up from

here to Tamagaon, 3,710m/12,172ft, another small hamlet. Another half an hour or so brings you to a tea-house shop called Chongar. Again, further on for an hour there is another one house tea-shop called Zhaite, a great place to have lunch - inside the house it is spotlessly clean.

During the day you will pass many chortens along the way. Always keep to the left as it is bad 'Karma' to go the wrong way round. This is perhaps the driest part of Mustang and much of one's energy is spent negotiating loose, dry soil. However the magnificent views of the countryside, the gentle contours of the north in contrast to the rugged mountains in the east and west are a source of inspiration.

Then there is a memorable trail to the Ngi La Pass at 4,045m/13,271ft. This pass is regarded as the southern boundary of Upper Mustang. The descent is nice and gentle until you take the footpath trail over the Ghami La Pass, 3,765m/12,352ft, and a beautiful contour leads you closer and closer to the compact village of Ghami. Behind the village look for the diagonal path up the dry hillside - that is the start of your route tomorrow.

In the afternoon we highly recommend walking half an hour from Ghami to the west to see the amazing cliff cave dwellings - unbelievable!

In Ghami you will stay in one of the best lodges in Mustang, owned by the 'royal' family there. You stay in the relatively new lodge and eat your meals in the ancient, large, family house, full of interesting things!

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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#### **Day 9: Trek to Lo Gekhar, 3,934m/12,907ft, via Dhakmar - 6 hours trek.**

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Leaving the magnificent Royal Mustang Lodge you walk down out of town to cross the river and climb up the other side. The diagonal path leads easily up across a dusty mountainside to a pass, the Deurali La, 3,717m/12,195ft. Looking back there are fine views of Ghami and you can see the state of dereliction of the old original palace. The path contours round the end of the next valley and you start to see the famous red cliffs above Dhakmar. The closer you get the more sensational they become, peppered here and there with clusters of cave dwellings.



It is an easy descent into the valley where shortly you will come to a single house. You then pass an old manor house directly under the red cliffs. The legend has it that Guru Rimpoche slew a dragon here and the cliffs were soaked with its blood.

Beyond there is a scattering of houses and the path now passes trees and fields before entering a very dry gully. You climb slowly up through eroded rock formations past fluted rock columns on your left. Out of the top of the gully you arrive at a flattish plateau. You contour round to the actual pass, the Marung La, 4,042m/13,261ft. This has wide views over Mustang and down below you can see the monastery of Lo Gekhar. This is one of, if not the most important, temples in Mustang and it is surrounded by chortens daubed a rust colour. It is said to date back to the 8th century when Guru Rimpoche came to slay the demon that was preventing the building of Samye Monastery in Tibet. The temple was built on the dead demon's heart, under the main statue of Guru Rimpoche. The inner temple is the pure essence of Tibetan Buddhism, and there is a real, tangible power in the place. It is also a school for boy monks.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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#### **Day 10: Cross the Chogo La, 4,301m/14,111ft, and trek to Lo Manthang, 3,770m/12,369ft - 4-5 hours trek.**

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So, from Lo Gekhar you have to cross the range of mountains ahead and then descend to Lo Manthang. First you drop the short distance to a bridge over a stream and start the long haul to the pass. It's a good area for spotting wildlife and you may see yaks, marmots and eagles. It takes 2½ hours to reach the Chogo La Pass at 4,301m/14,111ft. Before this there is a lovely meandering path contouring along a ridge. From the pass it is a long way down through desolate scenery to the 'Plain of Aspiration'. The main entrance to the city of Lo Manthang is on the northeast corner, so you circumambulate the wall to the gate, where you may find a group of people spinning wool and gossiping.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 11: In and around Lo Manthang. Walk to Namgyal village.**

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This day will be spent at leisure in and for exploration around Lo Manthang.

The city is an absolutely fascinating place, with narrow streets and houses built adjoining the city wall. It contains about 150 houses, plus many cells for lamas. There are three major temples within the city and there is a caretaker with a key available at certain times. These temples really are very impressive, with huge clay statues of various Buddhas. There is a large amount of renovation and restoration taking place in all the temples in Lo Manthang and this is going to take years to complete. The 2015 earthquake also did a lot of damage and part of the palace, an imposing 4-storey building in the centre of the city had to be demolished. The last king was an active horseman and kept a stable of the best horses in Mustang. He also bred Lhasa Apso dogs and had several monstrous Tibetan mastiffs. His son, Jigme Bista, is rightfully the new king of Mustang although the present government of Nepal has passed a law forbidding royal titles. He is therefore the 'unofficial' king.



There is plenty of time on this day to hike out to the village of Namgyal, one hour from Lo Manthang. There is a monastic school here that has a small museum. Then, if energy and inclination remain there are a couple of choices for you. Firstly you could climb up to the old ruined castle that sits atop the nearby hill. It only takes an hour and the views are unbeatable. There is a fabulous walk down from the castle to Lo Manthang. A second option would be to continue north up the valley to see the summer palace of Thinggar. Again it is only about an hour and is exciting country - you can almost smell Tibet from here! A round trip to Thinggar and back would take a total of about 5-6 hours.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 12: Drive to Tsarang, 3,520m/11,549ft, and visit monastery. Trek to Drakmar and back to Ghami past long mani wall. 6-7 hours trek.**

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Sadly you now have to begin the trek out of Mustang and say a fond farewell to Lo Manthang. The aim for the return trek is to see different places and new paths. Therefore today you first drive to Tsarang, Mustang's second most important township, avoiding trekking this section because it is well used by vehicles and can be very dusty. The drive is only about an hour. An early start would be a good idea though as there are a number of excellent things to see in Tsarang before trekking to Ghami. You may visit Tsarang's Thubten Shedrup Dhargyeling Monastery with its amazing murals and also visit the Samdrup Gedphel Palace which is now a small museum.

Then it's time to take the uphill path between two hills up the Syoda Khola to reach Dhakmar again. You then trek back to Ghami but on the lower trail, not crossing the Deurali La, but taking instead the path that leads to the longest mani wall in Mustang. The legend has it that this tremendous construction is built on top of the intestines of a demon slayed by Guru Rimpoche.

No doubt you will be looking forward to the now familiar lodge in Ghami.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 13: Trek to Geling and Syangboche - 6-7 hours trek.**

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You now take a different path back to Syangboche. From Ghami there is a track away from the jeep track which does not involve crossing the Ghami La. This leads through wild country to the village of Geling (also called Ghilling) which you will have looked down towards on your route in. This is another stunning Mustang village. From here you do have to follow the road to Syangboche.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 14: Drive to Samar - approximately 1 hour drive. Trek to Chussang - 4-5 hours trek.**

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Again, to avoid a tiresome stretch of road you will drive to Samar on the upper road. This is a relatively short distance. From Samar you trek to Chussang. It may or may not be possible to descend the original cliff path that we always used before 2015. However the path did suffer some damage at that time and if it has not been



repaired then you will trek back down through Gyakhar and down through Chele and on across the river to Chussang.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 15: Drive to Jomsom - 1½ hours.**

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Today you take the short jeep ride to Jomsom to avoid walking on the road. Jomsom is the administrative headquarters of the region and a busy town full of local officials as well as the usual traders and travellers.

**Overnight: Lodge / Tea House (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 16: Fly to Kathmandu via Pokhara. Transfer to hotel. At leisure.**

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Today you fly from Jomsom, through the Himalayan mountains, down the Kali Gandaki Gorge, feeling like an insect in such grand surroundings, to land in Pokhara. From Pokhara you will fly to Kathmandu where you will be met and transferred to your hotel. No doubt you will be shell shocked on returning to 'civilisation'!

**Overnight: Hotel Shanker or Similar, Kathmandu (Meals: B)**

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**Day 17: At leisure in Kathmandu.**

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Kathmandu, Asia's former hippie capital, has a wonderful mixture of crowded bazaars, Hindu and Buddhist temples, shrines and stupas, colonial and ancient architecture as well as more modern buildings. You could explore the bazaars and temple complexes of Durbar Square to best absorb the myriad impressions assailing your culture-shocked senses. You could also hire a mountain bike, or take a ride out to the fascinating city of Bhaktapur, an hour, or so east of Kathmandu. There are plenty of excellent places to eat in Kathmandu, cheap, noisy and cheerful in Thamel, or more luxurious in the surrounding areas of the city.



**Overnight: Hotel Shanker or Similar, Kathmandu (Meals: B)**

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**Day 18: At leisure in Kathmandu. Group transfer to the airport. Depart for London.**

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You will have time at leisure today when you may do some sightseeing, shopping or simply relax at your hotel. Later there will be a transfer to the airport for your overnight flight home.

**Overnight: In flight (Meals: B)**

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**Day 19: Arrive London.**

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## Our grading system

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Mustang & the Kingdom of Lo is graded as a Vigorous trekking holiday, as described below.

### **Vigorous**

Typically these trips involve 8 to 14 days (occasionally more) trekking in relatively remote landscapes. High passes up to 4,900m/16,000ft may be crossed (sometimes snow-covered) and there may also be glacier travel and peak ascents. Walking days can be between 5 and 8 hours with considerable ascents and descents. This grade also covers some European treks of shorter durations. Overnight stops on trek could be in tea houses, mountain huts or camping.

These holidays would suit enthusiastic hill/mountain walkers.

## Trip altitude

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**Important** - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend [www.medex.org.uk](http://www.medex.org.uk) as a good source of information.

## What the price includes

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**Mountain Kingdoms** aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

### What's included:

- ✓ An English-speaking Sherpa guide
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK & UK Departure Tax (flight inclusive only)
- ✓ Single, timed group airport transfers for international flights on arrival and departure
- ✓ All internal flights and hotel/airport transfers
- ✓ 4 \* hotel accommodation in Kathmandu & Pokhara, bed and breakfast, twin share basis
- ✓ Special Mustang permit
- ✓ Free use of a good quality down jacket and sleeping bag with liner on trek
- ✓ Accommodation on trek in local lodges / tea houses
- ✓ All meals on trek
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ Costs of all portage and their insurance
- ✓ Sightseeing where specified
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ A free high-quality Mountain Kingdoms kit bag
- ✓ The opportunity to attend a pre trip meet in the Cotswolds

### Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

### What's not included:

- × Travel insurance
- × Visa fees
- × Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu & Pokhara
- × Optional trips
- × Tips

### Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate. For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>.

## Your accommodation

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We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



### **Hotel Shanker or Similar, Kathmandu**

The Shanker is a 4\* heritage hotel situated just a 10-15 minute walk from the tourist area of Thamel. It has an outdoor swimming pool, a spa and a lovely garden, plus a choice of restaurants and bars. Rooms are large, elegant and well-equipped. The hotel is a converted royal palace with a fascinating history which in recent years has undergone a thorough and tasteful renovation.



### **Barahi Hotel or Similar, Pokhara**

Only a five minute walk to the Phewa Tal Lake front and the nearby bars and cafes, the Barahi enjoys an enviable location and good facilities. It has a landscaped outdoor pool and an all-day restaurant serving a range of Nepali and international dishes. Rooms are light and well-proportioned and come with a balcony, tea/coffee making facilities, mini bars and free Wi-Fi.



### **Lodges / Tea House**

Following our research trip in 2017 we have chosen a selection of the best small hotels/lodges/tea houses throughout this trek. They all have cosy dining/living rooms with Tibetan style furnishings. Some have en suite simple bathrooms, some have shared facilities. They are all full of character and are fun places to stay.

For various reasons, it is not possible to guarantee single rooms in these lodges. If you are travelling without a companion and would like a single this may sometimes be possible upon payment of a small supplement on the spot (usually around \$10). Alternatively, if the lodge has an odd number of guests on the night you may be lucky and find yourself in a room on your own. However it is more likely you will share with someone (of the same sex obviously). This would most likely be someone within your group but when the lodges are busy, it could even be someone else. Be prepared for this! We do however offer the option of a single room in your hotels in Kathmandu and Pokhara for a supplement.

## Meal arrangements

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Bed and breakfast in Kathmandu & Pokhara, all meals on trek.

## Flight arrangements

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### Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

### Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

## Further information

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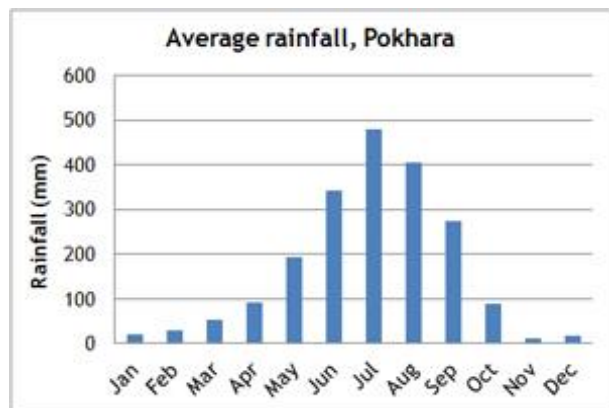
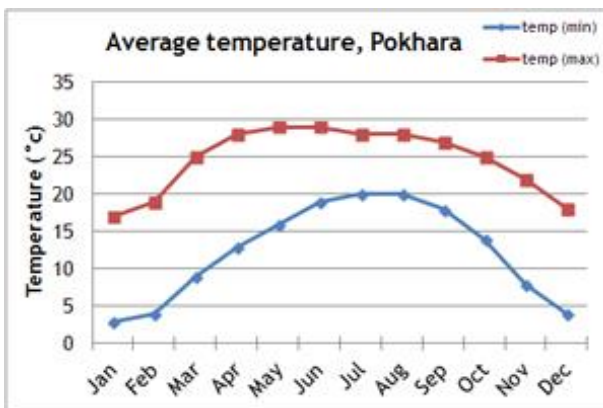
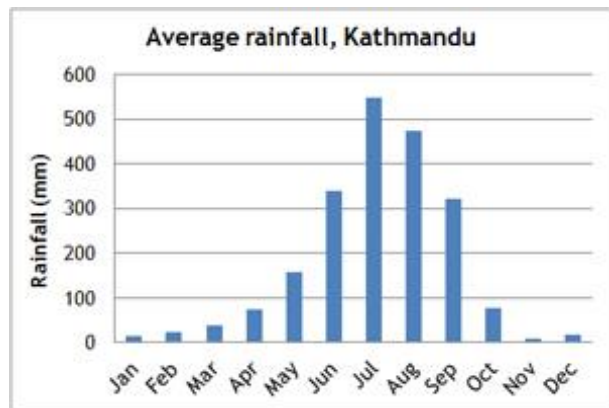
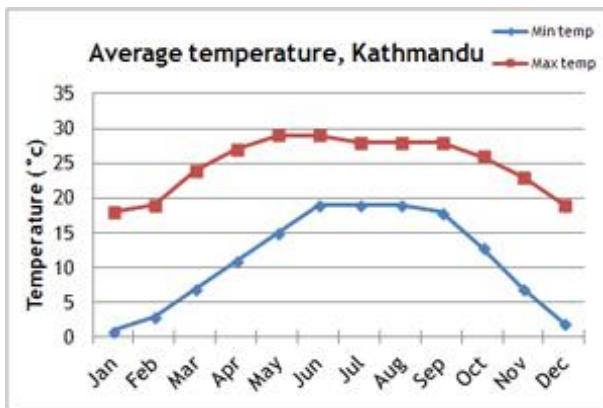
When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

## The nature of adventure travel

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Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

# Climate information



# Extensions

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## Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).



### Extra nights in Nepal

If you would like to extend your stay in Nepal, you can add extra nights at your group tour accommodation or choose from our range of distinctive properties in Pokhara and the Kathmandu area. We can offer luxury resorts, heritage hotels, tranquil lodges and characterful cottages. Our selection includes Dwarika's hotel in Kathmandu and its sister property - Dwarika's Resort at Dhulikhel, Pavilions Himalaya at Pokhara, Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge and Shivapuri Heights Cottage. Individual extension leaflets for all these options can be downloaded from our website or requested from our office.



### Kathmandu Valley sightseeing excursions

We can arrange half day or full day sightseeing tours taking you to the key cultural attractions of central Kathmandu or the Kathmandu Valley including the World Heritage Sites of Bhaktapur and Patan. Your tour will be led by an English-speaking guide and you will have a private vehicle and driver.



### Bhutan and Tibet extensions from Nepal

Whilst in the Himalaya, why not extend your Nepal holiday with a tour of the cultural highlights of Bhutan or Tibet. We offer several extension packages that include all accommodation, meals and sightseeing or we can tailor an itinerary to suit your exact requirements. Download extension leaflets for our Bhutan and Tibet extensions from Nepal, or contact the office to discuss various options.



### Wildlife extensions in Nepal - Chitwan, Bardia & Koshi Tappu

Visit Chitwan or Bardia National Parks home to a rich variety of birds and animals including elephant, rhinos, leopard and Bengal tiger. Stay in a comfortable lodge and enjoy a range of wildlife viewing activities. Alternatively visit the renowned Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve - one of the finest birdwatching and wildlife areas in all Asia.



### Lumbini

Enjoy a three day extension to the birthplace of Buddha, one of the most important Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the world. Take the short flight from Kathmandu, and spend two nights in a comfortable 3\* hotel, just steps from the Lumbini temple complex, with a full day to explore the fascinating UNESCO World Heritage Site in the company of your expert local guide.

## Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

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- We use carefully chosen lodges of authentic character throughout Mustang. They really add another dimension to your trek.
- We have designed the route to keep you walking away from the jeep tracks that connect some villages, giving a much better trekking experience.
- The route has been chosen to take you to some very special places in Mustang.
- We use 4x4s to overcome sections where jeep tracks would otherwise spoil the pristine nature of the trek.
- We supply, free of charge, top quality 4-season down sleeping bags with liners, and a down jacket.
- Your trek will be led by a knowledgeable, English-speaking guide supported by an experienced trekking crew who will provide an excellent standard of service. Your gear will be portered for you so all you need to carry is a small daypack.
- We use two of the best 4 star hotels in Kathmandu and in Pokhara.
- Our maximum group size is 12 for this trip. This provides for a genuine small group travel experience and helps reduce the negative aspects often associated with larger trekking groups.
- We have a wealth of experience running treks in Mustang having taken our clients there since 1994.
- This route was researched and re-designed by our M.D. Steve Berry and his wife Seraphina after their visit in 2017. If you have any questions about this trip then contact Steve or Seraphina on 01453 844400.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru
- If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights team for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com) or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.



## What our clients say

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*Spectacular scenery in Mustang. The region is so remote and beautiful with few other tourists/trekkers. Thank you Mountain Kingdoms for organising this fantastic trip for us.*

*-Ann Van Dierendonck, Malta (Private Departure)*

*Mustang truly is Shangrila-la. The scenery is beautiful - something new around every corner. The Tibetan culture teaches you many many new things daily. We had the most wonderful holiday. The use of guides with local knowledge was fantastic. The quality of accommodation and food was superb. Great experience.*

*-Mr & Mrs F, Scotland*



*A first class trip led by an excellent local guide... we had an audience with the King of Lo, visited three schools and had lots of interaction with the people of Lo Manthang. Superb scenery together with unique people making a fantastic experience.*

*-Mr & Mrs S, Derby*



*The crew were cheerful and smiling at all times and dedicated themselves to making sure that we were comfortable, well looked after and having an enjoyable experience. The food was excellent, Bhakhat, our fantastic, imaginative cook prepared wonderful, varied food for us. All in all we had a truly memorable holiday from start to finish.*

*- Mrs G, Lincoln*

*The pre-departure info was excellent and thorough. The local trek crew were fantastic - I can't praise them enough. MK obviously has respect for the local people it uses and the countries it operates in.*

*- Miss A, London*

*I just wanted to add my personal thanks to you guys for such a superb trek. Truly the best ever: wonderful scenery & cultural environment, a magical lack of crowds, vigorous enough without being too much, perfect weather, good equipment & food and a professional and experienced guide and team that worked professionally and seamlessly and were a pleasure to interact with.*

*-Mr C, Malaysia*

# Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

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## **Truly independent**

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

## **Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality**

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

## **Complete financial security**

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

## **No Surcharge Guarantee**

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

## **Award winning Responsible Tourism**

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).

## **Genuine small group travel**

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

## **Loyalty Discount**

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

## **Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier**

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

## **Comprehensive information**

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



## RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit [www.tourismdeclares.com](http://www.tourismdeclares.com)

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

### **Carbon Offsetting**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

### **Reducing Carbon Emissions**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

