

## Snow Leopard Trek, Upper Dolpo, Nepal

A trek for true adventurers through wild and ruggedly beautiful high-mountain scenery, far removed from the outside world.



### Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

### Holiday overview

Style	Trek
Accommodation	Hotels, Camping
Grade	Strenuous
Duration	27 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 21 days
Min/Max group size	5 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 5
Trip Leader	Sherpa Leader Nepal
Land only	Joining in Kathmandu, Nepal
Max altitude	5,300m/17,388ft, Kang La, Day 11

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



tel: +44 (0)1453 844400 fax: +44 (0)1453 844422 info@mountainkingdoms.com www.mountainkingdoms.com

# Departures

---

## Group departures

### 2024 Dates:

Sat 21 Sep - Thu 17 Oct

### 2025 Dates:

Sat 20 Sep - Thu 16 Oct

## 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.

## Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 5 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.

## 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

---



This trek will be led by a professionally trained, English-speaking Sherpa. They have an intimate and expert knowledge of the history, culture and nature of Nepal and will make your trip a memorable experience.

## Your trip highlights

---

- Genuinely remote and culturally distinct, this trek offers the opportunity to see a very different area of Nepal where few westerners ever reach
- Phuksundo Lake, Shey Gompa and Crystal Mountain are just some of the spectacular scenic highlights
- Spend time with the people of Dolpo who have retained their ancient traditions and beliefs due to their geographic isolation
- A carefully planned itinerary that gives excellent acclimatisation and follows Peter Matthiessen's journey in search of the elusive snow leopard
- Enjoy first rate camping facilities on trek and a four star hotel in Kathmandu before and after the trek
- 

## At a glance itinerary

---

Days 1-3	Fly to Kathmandu and onto Nepalganj.
Days 4-8	Fly to Juphal and trek to Phoksundo Lake. Rest day by the lake.
Days 9-12	Trek to Shey Gompa via the Kang La, 5,300m/17,388ft. Rest day at Shey Gompa.
Days 13-15	Cross the Saldang La, 5,100m/16,732ft, visit the Namjung monastery and trek to Saldang.
Days 16-23	Cross the Jang La, 5,170/16,962ft, visit Chaiba gompa and trek through the Tarap Valley.
Days 24-25	End trek at Juphal. Fly to Kathmandu via Nepalganj.
Days 26-27	Day at leisure in Kathmandu before flying to London.

## Trip summary

---

Isolated by towering, snow-clad peaks and home to the rarest of all mountain creatures - the snow leopard - the wildly remote region of Dolpo retains an air of mystery alongside its stupendous Himalayan scenery.

Your adventure begins with a flight to the airstrip at Juphal from where you trek north following the route made famous by Peter Matthiessen in his powerfully evocative book 'The Snow Leopard'. Entering Phoksundo National Park you too will be moved by the breathtaking beauty of the luminous jade-blue waters of its central lake surrounded by jutting, jagged peaks.

Continuing, the trek crosses the mighty Kang La, 5,279m/17,320ft, and passes the sacred Crystal Mountain to reach the remote eleventh century monastery of Shey Gompa. From here you cross the Saldang La and descend to the trek's northernmost point of Saldang, close to the Tibetan border, before heading south through barley fields and yak-grazed meadows with views of the mighty peak of Dhaulagiri. Descending further you enter the broad Tarap Valley dotted with monasteries, small village settlements and herds of blue sheep. Here the locals still wear their traditional Tibetan-style clothes and jewellery and practice ancient pre-Buddhist Bon Po religions. Winding gently beside the picturesque Behri River and through terraced fields your trail returns you to Juphal and the end of one Nepal's most outstanding and memorable journeys.

The sheer isolation of the region means that this Upper Dolpo trek is ideal for the experienced walker who would like a wild, yet culturally distinct, Himalayan experience.

## Your trip itinerary

---

### Day 1: Depart London.

---

Fly overnight from London to Kathmandu.

**Overnight: In flight**

---

### Day 2: Arrive in Kathmandu, 1,300m/4,265ft. Transfer to hotel.

---

On arrival in Kathmandu you will be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel. Here you can relax and maybe go out for a meal in the evening.

**Overnight: Kathmandu Guest House or Similar, Kathmandu**

---

### Day 3: Fly to Nepalganj, 150m/500ft.

---

This morning, you may have time for some sightseeing or shopping in Thamel. In the afternoon you will take a 1 hour flight to Nepalganj. The flight will give good views of the Himalaya to the north. Transfer to your hotel. The town is situated 3km from the southern Nepalese border with India. Here it is quite hot and tropical.

**Overnight: Kitchen Hut Hotel or Similar, Nepalgunj (Meals: BLD)**

---

### Day 4: Fly to Juphal, 2,475m/8,120ft. Trek to Rupagad, 2,120m/6,955ft - 3 hours.

---

A wonderful early morning, 35-minute flight, over the Himalayan foothills, with the major peaks including Annapurna and Dhaulagiri to the north east. After an exciting landing at the mountain airstrip at Juphal you meet your trek crew and Sherpa sirdar. It takes about an hour to descend through the village below the airstrip. Your path takes you through terraced fields to the Bheri River and you then walk for about an hour through the narrow gorge leading to Dunai until just before the big bridge over the river to Sulighat. Overnight camp in the garden of a lodge at Rupagad.



**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

### Day 5: Trek to Chhepka, 2,670m/8,759ft - 6 hours.

---

At the confluence of the Thuri Bheri and Suli Gad rivers you turn to the north and follow the Suli Gad. The trail is fairly undulating, but mostly up and the going is firm underfoot. You are never far from the river and can always hear its roar. You pass through an area which is overgrown with marijuana plants and there are also crops for the villagers and their animals including millet, pumpkin, potatoes, sweet corn and chillies. Many of the villages in this area are involved in the production of a lotus-like plant called 'chuk' that is used to make vinegar and medicines. It is dried and flown from Dolpo to Nepalganj and exported to India. You continue to track the river and eventually reach the settlement of Hanke, which is also the entrance to the Phoksundo National Park. The three villages you pass through have a strange name connection; Parella, meaning 'eyelash', Rahagaon meaning 'eyebrow' and Ankhe meaning 'eye'. You continue northwards, following the river to Chhepka.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

---

**Day 6: Trek to Somdua, 3,000m/9,845ft - 6-7 hours.**

---

A good deal of improvement has been done on this trail with new river crossings. The trail keeps closer to the river, crossing it several times; even so, there are still some steep undulations and at times the path hugs the cliff face. Frequent stops to admire the scenery, or to take a breather become a necessity. You continue to track the river until you reach your night's stop at Somdua.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 7: Trek to Phoksundo Lake, 3,600m/11,811ft - 6-7 hours.**

---

From Sumdo the trail goes very steeply uphill. Here you leave the river and follow the path high above the water. You ascend to a ridge, about 3875m/12,713ft, from where you will have the most staggering views of a 300m/1,000ft waterfall, the highest in Nepal and your first view of Phoksundo Lake, a study in turquoise. You then descend through birch forests to the upper reaches of the Phoksundo Khola and on to the picturesque settlement of Ringmo with its mud-plastered chortens and mani walls. The village now has solar panels helping to improve the quality of life of the villagers. From the settlement it is a short walk to the shores of Phoksundo Lake where you set up camp.



**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 8: Rest day.**

---

The nearby Bon Monastery is well worth a visit, as is the village of Ringmo. A walk part way round the lake is also very relaxing. There will be time to catch up with domestic chores as well, if need be.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 9: Trek to Upper Phoksundo Khola, 3,680m/12,074 - 6-7 hours.**

---

From the lakeside you follow the trail that skirts the edge of the lake itself. This airy trail, featured in the movie Himalaya, is in places suspended on a gangway of wood supported on pegs driven into crevices in the rocks and signals the remoteness of the area you are about to enter. You go very steeply up, to approximately 4,100m/13,450ft and then plunge down again to the valley bottom to enter the flood plain of the Phoksundo Khola and trek to your night stop alongside the river, but within the confines of the forest to avoid the worst of the wind which is prevalent in the valley bottom.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 10: Trek to Camp, 4,640m/15,224ft, below Kang La - 7-8 hours.**

---

There are quite a few stream crossings today, so you should take sandals, or footwear suitable for knee-deep crossings. This morning you continue along the level path through a glacial valley that now heads northwards. As this becomes narrower and narrower there are impressive vertical cliffs and contorted rock formations. At approximately 3,750m a stream issues from a narrow canyon on the east side. This is the Tuk Kyaksa Khola and the way followed by Matthiessen towards the Kang La. However, this is no longer the recommended route. In 2011 the MK group forded this side stream and continued north in the main valley on a good path until it climbs out of the main canyon. Here our route climbs north, veering away from the main track which swings west. Crossing a shoulder and continuing northwards we descend easily to the valley of the Ghyampo Kapuwa Khola and a lunch spot known as 'Dharamsala' with a herders' shelter. Later you will cross a bridge to the east side of the river and ascend scree before contouring round the hillside to re-enter the GKK valley at a higher level, fording the river to a superb campsite.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

---

**Day 11: Cross the Kang La, 5,300m/17,388ft, then trek to Shey Gompa, 4,340m/14,239ft - 6-7 hours.**

---

A day of grand scenery. Heading eastwards, we re-cross the river and over a low brow to a good path that ascends steadily towards the Kang La. The final stretch to the col is steeper and shaley. Ascent to Kang La from camp takes approximately 3 hours.

**Note:** There are two Kang Las. Both are near the head of the Hubaing Khola valley that is followed north to Shey. The pass crossed by Mattheissen appears to be the east Kang La. The MK sirdar in 2011 (Chet Gurung) was very much against using this route - arduous for trekkers, porters and mules alike based on his experience. The route recommended here, crossing the west Kang La, proved excellent with the campsite (referred to above) on the approach to the pass in just the right place.



The views from the Kang La are magnificent and well worth all the hard work. On descending to the valley floor, not more than 45 minutes to a good lunch spot by the Hubaing Khola, you make a long meandering trek along the banks of the river. A red chorten heralds your arrival at Shey Gompa where a cantilevered wooden bridge leads up to the Shey compound. Just before the bridge is a group of prayer mills turned by water wheels.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 12: Rest day at Shey Gompa.**

---

As Shey means crystal, this monastery is also known as the Crystal Monastery. The lama of Shey resides at a red hermitage known as Tsakang gompa which is west of Shey. It is not really a monastery, but a retreat. Tsakang had been a meditation centre of many famous lamas from Tibet. Shey Gompa belongs to the Chaiba community, followers of the Padma Sambhava and Kagyu sects. It was the first Kagyupa monastery and its founder was the lama Ten-szin-Ra-Pa. The monastery was founded during the 11th century. Shey is famous for its ancient Buddhist culture. In Dolpo the ancient Tibetan way of life combines animism with the teachings of Buddha. Drutup Yeshe introduced Buddhism in the Dolpo valley. Many years ago he came to Dolpo and came across a wild people whose supreme God was a 'fierce mountain spirit'. Crystal Mountain is to the west of Shey monastery. It is a very strange mountain indeed. Its contorted cliffs are laced with quartz and embedded with a rich variety of marine fossils.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 13: Cross the Saldang La, 5,100m/16,732ft, then trek to Namjung Gaon, 4,430m/14,239ft - 7 hours.**

---

You start by following a pleasant track amidst juniper high above the Sephu Kola. Eventually, the path enters the bare-sided stream bed with a good early lunch spot (last reliable water before pass) where two stream beds meet (c4,900m). A short distance up the left hand streambed, a path breaks east to zigzag up steep ground of shale, to a large rectangular cairn on the Saldang La. Here you can enjoy great views towards the arid landscapes of Mustang and the distant snow peaks of Tibet. The subsequent descent towards the north is long and tiring, but you finally come upon the welcome sight of pastures of grazing yaks and sheep and nomadic tents made from yak hair. This signals your approach to Namjung Gaon which lies hidden in a gorge. Like Shey, the Namjung Monastery is of the Karma-pa sect. The monastery, a red stone structure, is built against the backdrop of a cliff on the north wall of a gorge. The red and white colours of the gompa and its stupas are the only colour in this stark landscape. The village itself consists of only six stone houses and has terraced fields on both sides of the tributary, which flow down to the Nam Khong valley. The economy of the region is based on agriculture, animal husbandry and trading. In Dolpo only one crop a year can be grown and this is mainly barley. In some villages, buckwheat, oil-seed, potato and radish are also cultivated. Recently the main cliff temple collapsed and the villagers have now built a beautiful new monastery in the village itself. Look out for the idol of the first ruler of Bhutan, the Shabdrung. He has a black pointed beard and red hat.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 14: Trek to Saldang, 4,150m/13,615ft - 3 hours.**

---

In the morning after packing up the loads, you leave the Namjung Monastery and start climbing a scree slope. Further on, it begins a long thrilling traverse along some dusty barren mountains. Looking down into the valley

bottom it is very evident that the people have made best use of the fertile valley as one sees the neat terraced fields showing bright patches of green and ripening crops. You ascend to c4600m/15,092ft before going down steep slopes to the picturesque village of Saldang, situated on a plateau high above the Nam Khong nala and the biggest village of the inner Dolpo area. Though the village lies at about the same altitude as Ringmo it is totally different. Ringmo, a Himalayan village is situated below the tree line while Saldang belongs to the arid zone of the trans-Himalayan Tibetan plateau. The village stretches for 2km on an open slope and consists of five villages having eighty well-built houses with nearly six hundred villagers. It is prosperous, not only agriculturally, but also for its strategic location on a trade route to Tibet. After the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959, trade with Tibet was virtually stopped. It has been restored to some extent through the barter system by which Tibetan salt reaches mid-Nepal. The Drokpa people from the western plains of Tibet collect salt from the dried lakes north of Tsangpo.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 15: Rest day.**

---

Today is free for relaxation and mixing with the villagers in Saldang. You can visit the new gumpa some of which was painted by Tinley, the gentleman who played one of the leads in the film Himalaya. Travelling artists sometimes work here on murals of the life of the Buddha.



**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 16: Trek to Sibü, 4,230m/13,878ft - 6 hours.**

---

You bid farewell to Saldang and on the way down to the river bed you pass through terraced fields, stupas, chortens, heaps of mani stones and a Chaiba monastery. Namdo, the next village is also prosperous with sixty houses having nearly four hundred inhabitants. It stretches for more than 5km on the high slopes to the left of Nam Khong Khola. The Namdo monastery is located near the river bed. There is also another monastery on top of a high cliff. You camp near the small settlement of Sibü, right on the river bank.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 17: Trek to foot of the Jang La, 4,820/15,814ft - 5-6 hours.**

---

Following the line of the river valley the trail is fairly easy-going. After about two hours it is necessary to wade through the stream for a second time before turning south-east into a side valley. A reasonable path follows this and a further side valley generally southwards, finally ascending more steeply to a fine moorland campsite with views of snow-dusted mountains.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 18: Cross the Jang La, 5,170/16,962ft, trek to Tokyu Gaon, 4,350m/14,271ft - 6-7 hours.**

---

It is only a 2 hour climb to reach the top of the Jang La. The trail is generally well-compacted making the going underfoot easy, much easier than loose shale, but it is steep. From the top of the pass there are good views of the Dhaulagiri massif, glittering in the morning light. A rough track descends towards the Tarap valley. By the afternoon you find a green valley which leads you by a pleasant track down towards the Tarap Chu. Tarap is a dream valley with vast plains in high mountains extending 20kms along the river Tarap Chu. It has ten villages with cultivated fields, many gompas and chortens of both sects. You halt for the night above Tokyu Monastery. This monastery also belongs to the Chaiba sect.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---



---

**Day 19: Trek to Dho Tarap, 4,040m/13,255ft - 2 hours.**

---

You walk east along the downward course of the Tarap Chu in a plain valley with patches of lush verdant grass on both sides of the river - completely different from other parts of inner Dolpo. Before leaving Tokyu a short visit can be made to the Chaiba Gumpa. The trail is broad and well-travelled, making the going easy and there is much evidence of work in the fields where the women will be bringing in the harvest - the men are away bringing down the herds of animals for the forthcoming winter. There are many mani walls, but some of the chortens are in a bad state of repair. The 'French School' is just outside the village of Dho Tarap where you have your night stop. Dho is surrounded by an irregular stone wall and consists of thirty-four houses, divided into three clusters and built in a haphazard way.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 20: Morning at leisure. Afternoon trek to Langa, 3,870m/12,697ft - 3 hours.**

---

You will have a full morning to rest your legs and there may also be the chance to make friends with the people from Dolpo. Tarap is inhabited mostly by Magars who have lived here for generations, but also by a few Tibetans. They wear home-spun clothing that is sometimes dyed maroon and they favour Tibetan style somba (boots with upturned toes) for footgear. Men and women often wear both religious amulets and strings of coral and turquoise. The inhabitants of this village are both Bon Po and Buddhist (Nyingmapa).



You head out for a leisurely afternoon of trekking on a gradually descending trail that follows the banks of the Tarap Khola river. Where the Tarap Khola meets the Klang Khola river at Langa, you will camp for the night.

This morning you will have a chance to make friends with the people from Dolpo. Tarap is inhabited mostly by Magars who have lived here for generations, but also by a few Tibetans. They wear home-spun clothing that is sometimes dyed maroon and they favour Tibetan style somba (boots with upturned toes) for footgear. Men and women often wear both religious amulets and strings of coral and turquoise. The inhabitants of this village are both Bon Po and Buddhist (Nyingmapa).

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 21: Trek to Chhyugar, 3,440m/11,286ft - 6 hours.**

---

Your trek continues today, once again following the Tarap gorge. The path goes mostly down hill although there is a small ascent to bring you to a small Stupa. From here continue walking downhill to Nawarpani and on to Chhyugar. This small settlement has a seasonal tea shop so you may be able to find a welcome treat or two!

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 22: Trek to Khanigaon, 2,700m/8,858ft.**

---

Today its gradual walk to the hill top and then a continual descent to Laini Odar and on to Khanigaon.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 23: Trek to beyond Tarakot, 2,150m/7,054ft - 7 hours.**

---

You leave Khanigaon by the new suspension bridge and then walk alongside the river, sometimes going very high before reaching down to the water again. Some of the going is quite demanding and one bridge, said to have been unusable for six years, necessitates crossing on wet stepping-stones. Coming into the broad fertile valley of the Barbung Chu, you walk amongst the various crops of millet, sweet corn, barley, buckwheat, green beans, chillies and marijuana. Your lunch and night stop is high above the river, but there is a standpipe for water. Tarakot is an old fortress town known by the local people as Dzong, meaning 'fort'. Before the Gorkha dynasty Tarakot was the capital and had a dzong. The famous Sandul gumpa, which lies 8km east of Tarakot and at the junction of Barbung Khola and Tarap Chu, stands on a knoll to the south of Bheri River and at one time supervised collections of tolls for the trading caravans traversing an area called Tichu Rong.

As an alternative to camping at Tarakot, you may camp down by the river as there are good cooking facilities there and a clean, locked toilet for trekkers' use.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 24: Trek to Juphal, 2,475m/8,120ft - 6 hours.**

---

To reach Dunai, the trail is mostly down and fairly firm underfoot. Walking beside the Bheri River you use the ingenious path built twenty feet above the river. Dunai is a much larger village, or small township and is the administrative headquarters of the Dolpo region. You now retrace your steps to Juphal, which takes around three hours from Dunai. Initially the way is flat, but the final hour up to your destination seems steeper than you remember on Day One. A celebration party is in order for successful completion of the circuit!



**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

---

**Day 25: Fly to Kathmandu via Nepalganj. Transfer to hotel.**

---

Early morning flight to Nepalganj. This is a wonderful 35 minute flight over the Himalayan foothills, with fine views of the main peaks including Annapurna and Dhaulagiri to the north. Depending on the flight time from Juphal, you may have time to grab lunch at the Kitchen Hut Hotel before your connecting flight to Kathmandu. Transfer back to your hotel.

**Overnight: Kathmandu Guest House Or Similar, Kathmandu (Meals: B L)**

---

**Day 26: At leisure in Kathmandu.**

---

There will be time for sightseeing, souvenir shopping and to celebrate a long and exciting journey.

**Overnight: Kathmandu Guest House Or Similar, Kathmandu (Meals: B)**

---

**Day 27: Fly to London.**

---

After breakfast you will transfer to the airport for your flight home. **(Meals: B)**

## Our grading system

---

Snow Leopard Trek, Upper Dolpo is graded as a Strenuous trekking holiday, as described below.

### **Strenuous**

Our strenuous trekking holidays can involve anything from 10 to 30 days on trek and are often in remote areas, far from 'civilisation'. Rest days are interspersed but there may be up to 7 consecutive days of hard walking. Most treks reach altitudes of at least 4,900m/16,000ft and there will be a great deal of ascent and descent. The majority of our strenuous treks utilise camping, tea house or mountain lodge accommodation.

These holidays are suitable for fit individuals who have regular experience of mountain walking.

## Trip altitude

---

**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

---

**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 experienced, English-speaking Nepali guide
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK & UK Departure Tax (flight inclusive only)
- ✓ All internal flights and hotel/airport transfers
- ✓ Good standard hotel accommodation (4 star) in Kathmandu, twin share, bed and breakfast basis
- ✓ Best available hotels in Nepalganj on twin share, full board basis
- ✓ Restricted area permits
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ All camping facilities and all meals on trek
- ✓ Free use of a good quality down jacket and sleeping bag with liner on trek
- ✓ Camp staff to carry out all camp work
- ✓ A satellite phone is carried by your guide in case of an emergency
- ✓ Costs of all portage and their insurance
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan tree-planting project for clients taking our flight-inclusive option
- ✓ A free high-quality Mountain Kingdoms kit bag

### 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
- × 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.

Our 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 [For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>](https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign).

## Your accommodation

---

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.



### **Kathmandu Guest House or Similar, Kathmandu**

The Kathmandu Guest House is a 4\* hotel situated right in the heart of Thamel - the tourist hub of the city. Known as Kathmandu's 'original hotel' it has been extensively renovated over recent years and has good quality rooms, a spa, gardens and a restaurant. The hotel also houses the excellent Museum of Nepali Art (MONA) which showcases traditional and contemporary works of art - admission is free for Mountain Kingdoms guests.



### **Kitchen Hut Hotel or Similar, Nepalgunj**

We use the Kitchen Hut Hotel. An uninspired name for a hotel but this is the best hotel in Nepalgunj. Failing getting in here, we will use either the Hotel Batika, or the Sneeha Hotel.



### **Camp**

On our camping treks, the following are provided: a sleeping tent, a dining tent, a toilet tent exclusively for your group to use, and a kitchen tent. There are camp chairs or stools, a kerosene / gas lamp or candles for reading in the dining tent at night, a dining table, crockery and tableware. The staff put up and take down the tents, make the tea, cook the food, wash the dishes, and load the porters or pack animals. Your kit bag is carried for you either by porters or pack animals and you trek with just a light day sack.

## Meal arrangements

---

Bed and breakfast in Kathmandu, all meals on trek and in Nepalganj.

## Flight arrangements

---

### 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

---

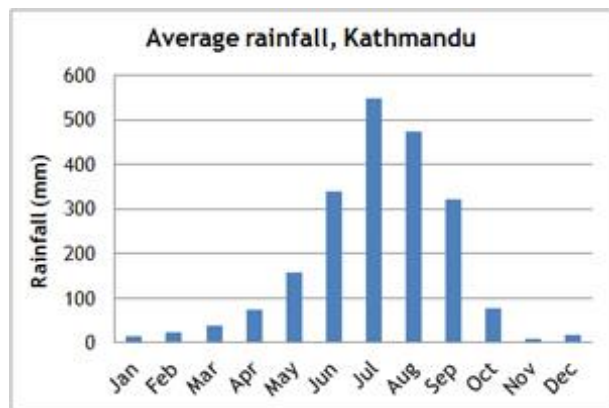
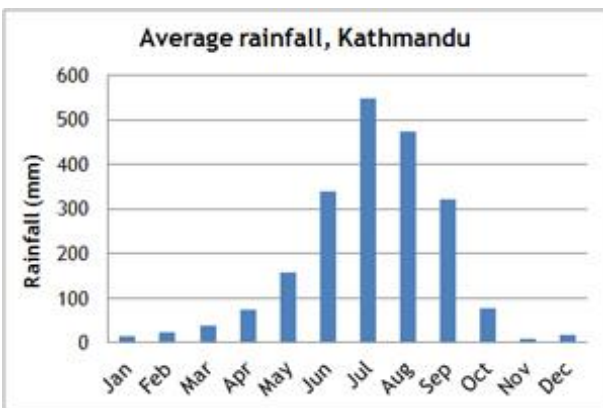
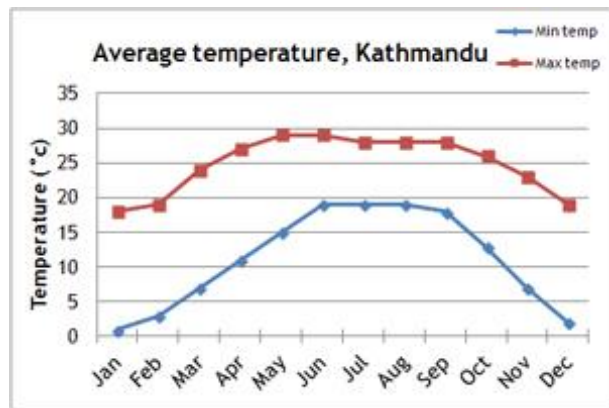
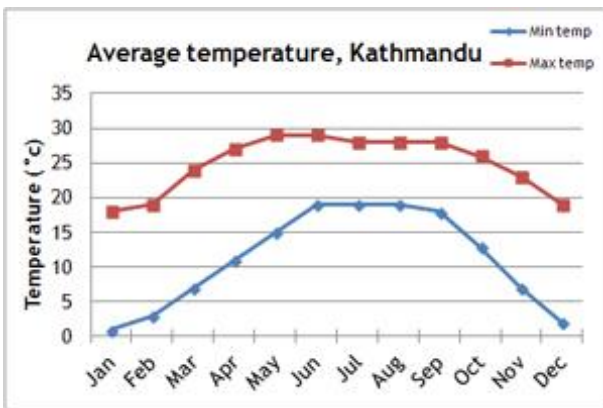
When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

## The nature of adventure travel

---

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

---

## 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?

---

- A superb route with excellent acclimatisation following Peter Matthieson's original journey in search of snow leopards.
- To maximise the cultural interest we include visits to important monasteries and several villages.
- We provide a good quality down jacket, sleeping bag and liner to be used, free of charge, on trek.
- We use the best camping equipment available and include many small touches that add greatly to the level of comfort you will experience on this trek.
- We use well-located, 4-star accommodation in Kathmandu.
- We have a wealth of Himalayan experience in the company. Our Operations Manager, Niki Morgan, has completed this trek so call her on 01453 844400 if you want to know more.
- 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.
- 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 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

---



*Be the first to review this trip.  
- This is a new trip, reviews coming soon*

# Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

---

## **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.

