



LANGTANG AND HELAMBU TREK

The Langtang valley is aptly called 'the valley of glaciers'. Here, mountains rise soaring towards the sky. The valley offers pine forest, swift mountain streams, rugged rock and snow-capped peaks, grassy downs and meadows strewn with daisies and wild primulas. In the upper part of the valley there are snow ridges spanning angry torrents, high passes enveloped in mist, tiny lakes of crystalline brightness and glaciated mountain giants.

Day 01 ARRIVE KATHMANDU

Welcome to Kathmandu, the capital city of the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal. The rest of the day can be spent browsing the hundreds of shops and stalls selling everything from Kashmiri carpets & Tibetan handicrafts to the latest trekking gear & reading

materials. In the evening, the group will be formally introduced to each other and our Guide for the adventures & activities over the next few days will brief us on the itinerary. We should pay attention in particular to the safety aspects of the briefing. Any questions or doubts should be asked and clarified at this time. All flight tickets for reconfirmation should also be handled to the Guide who will safe-keep them until our return to KTM, so do bring your flight tickets along.

Day 02 KTM-DHUNCHE (BLD)

Looking at a map, Langtang seems quite close to Kathmandu, but in reality you still have to endure a jarring 8hr ride in a wheezing bus to get to Dhunche. About 45 minutes out of Kathmandu, you pass through the town of Kakani where there are great views of the Mustang, a grouping of peaks only partially visible from Kathmandu. Trisuli, on the river

of the same name, is a busy bazaar town, and is often called Trisuli Bazaar. The river, which flows Southwest, is very popular with rafting companies and you may see a group getting ready to put in here. For many years, this was the start of the Langtang trek, but there is now a rough road to Dhunche that bypasses the old trail and cuts the number of days necessary for this trek. It is a rough road to Dhunche, and during the rainy season there are frequent landslides, which may keep the road closed until sometime in mid-October. For part of the way the road clings to the edge of a steep mountain. Dhunche (1970m) is an attractive village with large stone houses. Here, there is a police checkpost where you must show your trekking permit and pay the entrance fee, for the Langtang National Park, which you'll be trekking through. This is more or less the "gateway" to the essentially long, narrow valley running parallel to the Tibetan border, and hemmed in by high, snow-capped peaks. From our tents, there are excellent views of Gheng (6581m) and Langtang Lirung (7246m) to the north and Ganesh (7460m) to the west.

Day 03 DHUNCHE-SYABRU (BLD)

Trek start with walking along the road descend to Trisuli River and to Thulo Bharkhu then steep up to ridge through the pine woods. From here you have fine views up the valley towards the Tibetan border - about 20km away - a taste of things to come. The trail out of Bharkhu climbs a steep slope to the top of a ridge (2300m) where there is a good area to take a break. This is a good place for bird watching too. You have now entered the Langtang Valley and you can see Mustang to the west, Tibet to the north, and Langtang Lirung in the east. You'll also be able to see, on a ridge top below you, the village of Syabru. The trail contours around the ridge at first before descending a short steep slope into Syabru (2150m).

Day 04 SYABRU-LAMA HOTEL (BLD)

Today's trail starts meandering through the cool deciduous forests of oak and maple that cover the lower sections of the valley and climbs through massive stands of spruce, fir and blue pine. Towering walls close in and your paths will skirt precipitous drops, which fall into a silt-laden river below. It's a classic transition from temperate lowland forest to high-altitude Himalayan valley. Descend through the village of Syabru and continue down the ridge until you come to a trail to the east that drops sharply off the ridge and through a dense forest. Cross a bridge (1960m) over a tributary of the Langtang Khola and then climb for a short distance. The trail continues level for a ways before descending, still in forest, to the Langtang Khola. The trail follows the south bank

of the river through a deep gorge with no views of the mountains, crossing another tributary in about an hour. In another hour from this tributary, cross yet another bridge (2050m) to the north bank of the Langtang Khola. The trail begins climbing up from the river at this point and in an hour, shortly after the trail levels off, you join the old Langtang trail (2380m) from Syarpagaon and Syabrubensi. Another hour from this trail junction brings you to the Lama Hotel in the tiny village of Chongong (2400m). Like all of Langtang's guesthouses. At this point you start to become aware of the firm control the government exercises over the parks - with results that are often good, but sometimes questionable. On one hand, there are strict controls on tree-felling, and the park has remained mercifully free from the satellite dishes that dominate some over-trekking parts of Nepal.

Day 05 LAMA HOTEL-LANGTANG VILLAGE (BLD)

A day further on the forest peters out and you start getting the first tantalizing glimpses of snow-capped peaks. From the Lama Hotel the trail climbs steadily to Ghora Tabela with glimpses of Langtang Lirung (7246m) through the trees. At times the trail becomes very steep but only for short distances. Gradually the air becomes thinner and the climate colder. At Ghora Tabela (3010m) the trail leaves the forest and a spectacular view of Langtang Lirung appears. Ghora Tabela was once a Tibetan resettlement camp but is now an army post. There is a good lodge where we'll stop for lunch. Continue up the valley, leaving the forests behind, the trail ascends steadily up to Langtang village, passing below a monastery about 30min beforehand. Langtang is an interesting Tibetan-style village with stone-walls enclosing houses and fields where you just might see your first yaks. The Langtang National Park headquarters is also located here. After Langtang, you can see a community of typical flat-roofed Tibetan houses and the valley flattens and broadens into open pasture. This is perfect for raising yaks, and you'll see these imposing beasts everywhere.

Day 06 LANGTANG-KYANJIN GOMPA (BLD)

You may notice that the valley above this point is U-shaped, which indicates that the valley was carved by a glacier. Below Langtang, the valley has the characteristic V-shape of a river-carved valley. Leaving Langtang, you ascend gradually to a chorten (a small Tibetan Buddhist stupa) behind which is a very long mani wall. The trail passes two small villages and the village widens. You cross several streams and a moraine before arriving at Kyanjin Gomba (3800m). Between Langtang and Kyanjin Gomba, the views just get better and better where you'll see Yansa Tsenji (6580m) and Kimshun (6750m) to the north and the Langtang Himal to the

northwest. Since you'll probably arrive before lunch, you'll have time to do some exploring in the afternoon, though you may be experiencing some discomfort from the altitude. Alternatively, take a good rest and allow your body to acclimatise with the high altitude as much as possible to be fully-prepared for more ascending during the next day.

Day 07 KYANJIN GOMPA (BLD):

A day hike farther up the valley past the airstrip will provide more spectacular views that include Langtang Lirung (7246m), Ganachenpo (6400m), Langshisa Ri (6320m), Dorje Lakpa (6700m), Lenpo Gang (7100m), and Urkinmang (6170m). A 4hr walk to the east of Kyanjin Gompa from the village is 5000m Tsergo Ri. If you start early in the morning and are well-acclimatized, you should be able to climb this peak and return to Kyanjin Gompa in 1 long day. The reward for climbing to the prayer flags on its summit is a magnificent view of the 7246m Langtang Lirung, the mountain that dominates the valley. There are numerous alternatives side trips. The surrounding area, especially to the north, is vast and has many smaller, uninhabited valleys - ideal for high-altitude, backcountry trekking. Several of the more moderate local peaks are quite climbable and provide breathtaking panoramic views of mountains in Tibet, including the 8027m Xixa Pangma. If you have the inclination and the right equipment provided by us, the upper Langtang Valley can also be used as a base for glacier exploration.

Day 08 KYANJIN GOMPA-LAMA HOTEL (BLD)

Since you'll be acclimatized and will be descending, you should be able to reach the Lama Hotel in a day's walk (approx. 6hrs) from Kyanjin Gompa.

Day 09 LAMA HOTEL-SYABRU (BLD)

From Lama Hotel you should be able to reach Syabru in another 6 hours' descending. Keep retracing your steps.

Day 10 SYABRU-SING GOMPA (BLD)

Once you leave behind the pleasant village of Syabru, climb past the gompa, school and army post, and switchback up the steep hill above the village. There are a few houses and potato fields steep trail and pleasant teashops in the settlement of Dursagang at 2550m. The trail continues less steeply, now mostly in forests, past an old chorten to the top of the ridge and two shoddy tea shops at 3000m. Coming out of the forest, the trail climbs a bit more before reaching the top of the ridge. There is a view of Dhunche far below in the valley. The trail continues across the head of a second valley, then

reaches a final ridge at 3260m. The small Buddhist monastery of Sing Gompa is about 100m along the trail to the left. This is the main attraction at Chandan Bari, elevation 3250m. Because you'll be crossing a 4610m pass, it is essential that you spend the rest of the day acclimatizing to the high elevation.

Day 11 SING GOMPA-GOSAINKUND (BLD)

From Shin Gompa the trail continues climbing steadily through rhododendron forest with the Trisuli Khola far below. The trail crosses over to the Langtang side of the ridge you are climbing and stays in deep forest for a while, then emerges onto a saddle at Cholang Pati (3380m) where a Coca Cola break awaits you. When you embark on the trail again, a signpost in Nepali alerts you that you are now entering the Gosainkund protected area where the killing of animals, lighting of wood fires, and grazing of goats is prohibited. Be sure to carry plenty of water today since there are only a few places along the ridge where water is available. There are good views of Langtang Lirung from the north side of the ridge, and looking west, you can see the Mustang, Himalchuli, and Manaslu. It is even possible to see Tibet from here. You cross high altitude summer pastures for sheep and goats before going back to the south side of the ridge overlooking the Trisuli Khola. When you cross to the south side of the ridge the trail becomes much narrower than it has been up to now, and finally be able to see the first of the Gosainkund lakes, Saraswati Kund from here. After crossing a spur, the second lake in the chain, Bhairav Kund, comes into view. The trail climbs gently but continuously to a ridge and drops about 20m to the third and largest lake, the holy Gosainkund, at an elevation of 4380m, which is evident from the large stone Shiva lingam and the four guesthouses around its shores. Hundreds of people come here to worship and bathe in this lake during the full moon festival each August.

Day 12 GOSAINKUND-GHOPTA (BLD)

Leaving Gosainkund, the trail skirts the shore of the lake before ascending towards the Laurebina Pass. As you climb this easy slope, you'll see four more lakes of smaller scales. You'll know you have reached the pass at 4610m when you see the many cairns that have been built over the years. The trail now descends, steeply at first but becoming more gradual, to the southeast on a rocky path. In about an hour you'll come to some roofless stone herders' huts, and from here the trail descends another ridge, crossing several streams and passing two waterfalls. After passing another stone hut, you climb to another ridge and Ghopte (3430m), where overhanging rocks form a cave that is used as a campsite by trekkers

can see the lights of herders. This is a long and rough day of trekking. At night you can see the lights of Trisuli Bazaar far below and the glow of Kathmandu to the south-east.

Day 13 GHOPTE-THAREPATI (BLD)

From Ghopte, the trail descends to more caves and enters a thick forest of Pine and rhododendrons. After crossing a stream, which is dry for part of the year, the trail will make a final ascent to Tharepati (3490m), a grouping of small stone huts used in the summer months by herders. After lunch, we'll take a moment to climb the hill to the east of the ridge for views of Dorje Lakpa, Shisha Pangama (8013m) and peaks all the way to Khumbu.

Day 14 THAREPATI-KHUTUMSANG (BLD)

The day starts out with an easy 1-hr descent through forests, across flower-strewn meadows and crossing streams before arriving at Magengoth at 3150m. This is a very remote area of high pastures and oak and rhododendron forests. Keep your eyes open for wildlife. If you're going to see any wildlife at all other than birds, this is probably the most likely area. For the first 3 hrs the trail descends gradually, but the second half of the day 's trek is a steep descent to Khutumsang (2470m), a small village on a windy ridge saddle. The Langtang National Park office here will probably check your park permit. The village has completely adapted itself to trekkers; almost every house in town is a hotel or shop.

Day 15 KHUTUMSANG-CHISOPANI (BLD)

Keeping to the side of the saddle, the trail ascends to a grassy meadow where you can look over to a large chorten at Gul Bhanjyang. Cross a pass at 2620m followed by dropping down to the Tamang village at 2130m. This is a delightful, classic hill village with a pleasant main street. Continuing along a forested ridge to Thodang Betini, a long strung-out village at 2100m. Beyond Thodang, you'll come across a 2470m pass at the top of the Jhagin Danda ridge, where a steep, 200m descent on a stone staircase will bring you to a few teashops at Chipling (2170m). More steep descents follow as the trail drops to the Pati Bhanjyang at 1770m. The trail then makes a steep climb towards 2100m to Chisopani. The view of the Himalaya from Chisopani is spectacular enough to justify a night here.

Day 16 CHISOPAN I- KTM (BL)

The sunrise on the Himalaya, from Annapurna to Everest, is particularly outstanding from this point. After passing through the village of Borlang Bhanjyang, you continue ascending most of the

Shivapuri ridge through dense forest of pine, oak and rhododendron trees. Skirting down from 2440m, you can see the remnants of a Chaurabas village. Followed by entering into the Shivapuri Watershed & Wildlife Reserve, a 112-sq-km walled area. At Mulkharka (1895m), we'll take a break where you can sit back and enjoy a spectacular panoramic view of the Kathmandu Valley. The end of the trek comes to a halt at Sundarijal and we'll drive back (1hr) to the dust of Kathmandu and check into Norbu again. Upon taking a hot, relaxing shower, get ready for some food and souvenir hunting out in the streets of Thamel.

Day 17 KATHMANDU (B)

A free day for own exploration in the valley. Overnight at hotel.

Day 18 Departure (B)

All too soon it's time to bid Nepal farewell and one realizes that we can never be intimate, only acquainted with this amazing adventure kingdom.

Cost Includes: All land and domestic air transfer as per itinerary. Arrival and departure transfers. Twin share accommodation in Kathmandu on B&B basis. All accommodation and 3 meals while on the trek in Tea Houses. Fully escorted trek with English speaking guide and 1 porter between 2 persons. Trekking permit and National Park Fees. Wages, equipment, insurance and other facilities to staffs.

Not Included: International Airfare, Visas US\$30. Airport Departure taxes/Excess baggage charges. Other meals not stated (Lunch/Dinner in Cities like Kathmandu and Pokhara). allow \$20 per day. Items of personal nature ie. Soft/hard drinks, tips etc. Travel Insurance (this is a mandatory condition of booking). Medical evacuation in case of emergency. Personal spending money

Important: Before you travel please check your **Tour Voucher** and **Arrival Information** for the latest joining instructions. This will be sent to you upon receipt of final payment.

All itineraries are subject to change without prior notice.