



MERA PEAK EXPEDITION

Camping

No. of days 23

Graded - Highly challenging

Nepal

Nepal, a tiny country, nestled in the Himalayas between India and China, is one of the most diverse and fascinating countries in the world.

Covering an area of only 147,181 sq. km, Nepal encompasses the world's highest mountains and the deepest valleys as well as low elevation rain forest.

Although the width of the country is only 200Km North to South, Nepal has the highest altitude variation of any country on earth, from 20m above sea level to 8848m above sea level (Top of Everest). The country is divided in to 3 elevation Zones viz. the low Terrain, the midhill region and the high Himalayas, which contains 1/3 of the Himalayan range with 9 of the world's highest mountains. This wide diversity of landform gives Nepal an incredible wealth of flora and fauna. Nepal is not only famous for its landscape but also renowned for the friendliness of its people. The people of Nepal are as variable and intriguing as the country's geography. There are more than 37 ethnic groups with their own language and culture. Hinduism is the official religion, which the majority of the people practice. Many people throughout the country are Buddhist and the two religions have co-existed in harmony over the ages. A small number of people practice Christianity and Islam.

Nepal at a glance: Longitude: 26'12' and 30'27' No
Latitude: 80 degree 4' and 88 degree 12' East
Population: 28 million
Capitol: Kathmandu
Area: 147,181 sq. km.

Everest

Mount Everest, named after George Everest, the Surveyor General of British India, lies in the Khumbu region of Nepal. The first summit attempt on Everest was by the British in 1921 and only after 32 years of intense exploration, Everest was finally scaled on May 29th, 1953, by Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay under Lord Hunt's team.

The Nepalese name for Everest is Sagarmatha which means "Goddess of the sky" and the Tibetan name for it is Chomolungma which means "Mother goddess of the earth".

By whatever name you call her, she remains the tallest mountain in the world consecrated in midst of the gigantic mountains and glaciers as though they were her subjects. She truly looks like an Empress in her utmost beauty and glory and has attracted hundreds and thousands of mountain lovers over the years.

Himalayan Mountaineering

Ever since the Himalaya in Nepal has been opened for climbing, it has attracted thousands of mountaineers. Thousands of people have challenged their minds and bodies to conquer these magnificent mountains.

Nepal Himalaya has numerous of mountains which are 7000m and higher, which require extensive technical experience and a lot of money to climb. Apart from these technical expedition peaks, there was created in 1978, under the control of the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), a list of mountains, between 5587m to 6654m, called "Trekking Peaks". Unlike the technical expedition peaks, which are a complicated and an expensive affair, these "trekking peaks" can be climbed without financial and administrative problems. There are 1310 identified peaks which are above 6000m, one fourth are officially opened for mountaineering.



Your Adventure

Your Expedition begins with a scenic flight to Lukla. A trip to Mera Peak takes you through remote region of Nepal with densely forested hillsides of Nepal's middle hills to the alpine environment. Mera Peak at 6 476m is the highest of the trekking peaks in Nepal and is considered as one of the most popular since the panorama is stunning and it requires only basic mountaineering skills. It is situated to the south of Everest. The ascent of the peak is technically straightforward, but sometimes, heavy snow and the maze of crevasses can make the way longer to the summit. From the summit of Mera Peak one can see 5 of the 6 highest mountains in the world: Everest, Kangchenjunga, Lhotse, Makalu, and Cho Oyo. The first ascent was on May 20, 1953 by Col. Jimmy Roberts and Sen Tenzing.

Although no previous climbing experience is required you must be very fit and have extensive outdoor experience to participate in this Expedition.

Grading: This expedition is graded 6 which is equivalent to extremely demanding and challenging. Participants should have at least a basic knowledge of the use of ice axe and crampons, though first time climbers maybe accepted, provided she/he is very fit. Medical certificates are required prior to acceptance on any climbing treks. We strongly recommend you to undergo extensive physical training at least 4 months prior to the expedition.

Please note: Any ascent of a Himalayan peak must be taken seriously. The Group leader will take all factors concerning group fitness and acclimatization, weather and snow condition into consideration when making a decision. While recognizing that this ascent is important to the group, first priority will always be safety. The decision on whether or not you will be able to attempt Lobuche Peak rest with the Group Leader. His/her decision is final and must be accepted.

Summary Trek Distance: Approx. 250 km
Maximum altitude: 6476m (21,075ft)
In / Out: Kathmandu.



ITINERARY:

- Day 1. Arrive Kathmandu (1330m), welcome dinner
- Day 2. Half day city tour, lunch and trek briefing
- Day 3. Fly to Lukla (2830m) and trek to Puiyam (2800m)
- Day 4. Trek to Pangom (2900m)
- Day 5. Trek to Kurke (3720m)
- Day 6. Trek to Thuli Kharka (4300m)
- Day 7. Trek to Kothe (3600m)
- Day 8. Trek to Thangna (4400m)
- Day 9. Rest and acclimatization at Thangna (4400m)
- Day 10. Trek to Khare (5000m)
- Day 11. Rest and acclimatization day at Khare(5000m)
- Day 12. Trek to Mera Peak Base Camp (5200m) and set up Base Camp
- Day 13. Rest at Base Camp
- Day 14. Set up Advance Base Camp (5780m)
- Day 15. Summit Mera Peak (6476m)
- Day 16. Extra day for attempting summit and back to Base Camp
- Day 17. Trek to Kothe (3600m)
- Day 18. Trek to Thuli Kharka (4300m)
- Day 19. Trek to Lukla (2830m)
- Day 20. Extra day to cross the pass in case of snow
- Day 21. Fly to Kathmandu
- Day 22. In Kathmandu
- Day 23. Departure

Please Note that the above itinerary is only a guide and that it could change. A lot of things have to be taken into account like weather, general walking pace of the group, mountain safety etc. Your group leader can change the schedule if necessary with prior notice to you, keeping safety first in mind.



Your Activity

Day 1 - Arrival

Once you reach KTM airport and finish with the immigration and custom formalities be prepared to confront the confusion outside the airport which is common in most of the south Asian countries. As you walk out of the Exit door into the passenger “pick up area” you will see hundreds of people with different sign boards in their hands, taxi drivers looking for fares, hotel touts looking for customers and porters trying to help with the luggage for tips. Please remain calm and do not walk out of the restricted area into the crowd straight away. Remain there and try to find the Hi On Life sign board. Once you spot it, walk straight to the signboard and identify yourself. From here we will take care of you. When you arrive to your hotel you will be briefed about your activities and "do's and don'ts" while your stay in Kathmandu. We will also collect some documents from you. Please have the following things handy when arriving.

1. **Travel/ Medical Insurance** (photo copy)
2. **3 passport size photos**
3. **Photocopy of your passport.**

In the evening we will go for a traditional Nepali dinner at Kathmandu's finest Nepali restaurant to end the day.

Day 2 – City tour and Trek briefing

After breakfast you will be taken for a half day city tour where you will be visiting some historical temples and monuments. You will end your sightseeing with a lunch.

After your lunch you will return to your hotel and your Group leader will give you your trek briefing and issue you your “trek pack” consisting of a duffle bag, down jacket, sleeping bag and inner liner for your sleeping bag. Your afternoon is free for you to do your packing and purchasing your last minute items for your trek.



Day 3 - Kathmandu - Lukla- Puiyam

A very early morning wake up and transfer to the domestic airport to board our flight which is a small 19 seated twin otter. The flight times can be flexible because we need clear weather both in Kathmandu and Lukla to be able to fly. So this can sometimes involve waiting in the terminal for a long time. Once we get the all clear signal we take off to our destination on a 35 min scenic mountain flight to Lukla.

After landing we will have time to explore the village while the Sherpa crew sort and load our trekking equipment. After a short while we begin the trek by descending towards the Dudh Kosi River, where we meet the main trail from Namche Bazaar, just below Chaurikharka (2713m). From here we descend down valley to the south, to the small village of Surkhe. The trail from Surkhe continues by ascending on a stone staircase that leads to Chutok La (2945m) where we have good mountain views and a glimpse of the airstrip at Lukla. From here the trail contours through forested hillside to the village of Puiyan (2800m), where we stay for the night.

Day 4 - Trek to Pangom (6 hrs)

Today we leave the classic trail of Jiri to Everest, and head east into the mountains, following the old trading route linking the Solo Khumbu to the Arun Valley. From Puiyan we continue to contour down the valley through a forest high above the Dudh Kosi River. After an hour, the trail crosses below the Khari La (2900m). From here it is another two hours to Bupsa where we stop for lunch. In the afternoon we climb a narrow trail through terraced fields to reach Pangom at lunchtime. From here you can look back west to the panorama of Numbur (6959m), Khatang Ri (6853m), Karyolung (6681m), Kwangde (6187m) and Teng Kang Poche (6500m).

Day 5 - Trek to Kurke (5-6 hrs)

We start by climbing the ridge of the Zattara Danda, north of the Pangom La (3140m). After a few hours climb we are in the wild and have left habitation. We take lunch at a suitably scenic spot along the ridge. In the afternoon we continue to climb along the ridge through rhododendron and bamboo forest. At the end of the trekking day, we come to the edge of the forest and camp will be set up on the grassy slopes of the shepherds' summer pastures known as Kurke.

Day 6 - Trek to Thuli Kharka (7 hrs)

From here the trail climbs, traversing across the western slopes of the ridge to a lonely Mani-wall. Here we have a spectacular view down into the Dudh Kosi valley. Across the river we have Numbur, Teng Kang Poche and Kwangde, all now familiar peaks. Another high traverse across grassy slopes and ridges brings us to our lunch spot in the meadow of Ek Rate, below a notch in the Zattara Danda. After lunch we cross through the notch to the eastern side and continue to traverse along the ridge on a narrow track until we meet the trail to Lukla at Cetera (marked as Thuli Kharka on some maps). There we set up our camp.

Day 7 - Trek to Kothe (6 hrs)

The trail traverses around some ridges, then begins to drop into the Hinku Valley, We walk through a lovely mixed fir- and rhododendron forest. We will have a great view of Mera Peak and the Upper Hinku from the crest of the last ridge, before we start the descent into the valley. The descent is steep and slippery. After lunch we follow the forest close to the rocky riverbed until we reach our camp on a sandy bank.

Day 8 - Trek to Thangna (6 hrs)

In the morning we follow the riverbed for a while, before climbing onto grassy meadows. We will reach the yak herders' settlement of Gondishung, where we have lunch. From here there are superb views of the steep south face of Mera. After lunch we reach a small Gompa set under a large rock. From here it's an easy walk on moraines up the valley to the settlement of Tagnac and our camp for the next two days. We get splendid views of Charpati Himal (6769m) to the north, Mera Peak to the east, and Kusum Kanguru to the west.

Day 9 - Rest and acclimatization

Depending on how you feel, you may climb in the hills behind Tagnac for acclimatization and for good views of the Mera La and the trail ahead. In the afternoon you can relax, enjoy the views or read a book in the sun.

Day 10 - Trek to Khare (3-4 hrs)

Today is a short day. We start by crossing the debris of the flood, then climb glacial moraines, by passing Sabai Tsho, until we reach a pretty valley which flows from the glaciers ahead. Above are the awesome faces of Charpati Himal and the outlying peaks of Mera. After some time on sandy flats we will climb a grassy moraine ridge to our camp, opposite the north-west face of Mera Peak. The Mera La (5415m) and the way ahead are clearly visible from our camp at Khare.

Day 11 - Rest and acclimatization

As we have gained altitude steadily for the last couple of days, it demands a rest and acclimatization day. We will utilize this day as a rest day to regain our energy and do a slight exploration around the area.

Day 12 – Trek to Base Camp (4-5 hrs)

The trail is more rugged and rough. The views of the glaciers are magnificent. Base Camp is set up on the Hongu side in the moraine of the Mera Glacier.

Day 13 - Rest and Acclimatization day

We will use the following day to rest and gain back the strength for the final ascent. Moreover you can utilize this day to prepare and try your climbing gears.

Day 14 - Ascend to High Camp (6 hrs)

The next day we set up Advance Base Camp. Advance Base Camp is set at 5800m near a rocky ridge on the Mera Glacier. The views from high camp is alone one of the best viewpoints in Nepal, offering the panoramic views of Kanchanjunga, Chamlang, Makalu, Baruntse, Ama Dablam, Cho Oyu and Kangtega. In the north the giant faces of Everest, Lhotse and Nuptse appear. Please note! From here onwards nobody should go even 20m away from the camp without consulting your Group leader.

Day 15 - (Summit Mera Peak and Back to Base Camp) (12-15 hrs)

The next morning we start early for the final summit. We climb the standard route from the north. It involves high altitude glacier walking. We gain altitude very rapidly. Good weather and snow conditions are, of course, necessary for safety and success. The ascent of the peak is technically straightforward, but sometimes, due to heavy snow and the maze of crevasses, it can take longer to reach the summit. To summit, willpower and stamina are needed, but the feeling of achievement on top of this 6476 meters giant is incredible. From

the summit of Mera Peak we can see 5 of the 6 highest mountains in the world: Mount Everest, Kangchenjunga, Lhotse, Makalu, and Cho Oyo. A short victorious moment is spent at the top and then we descend to Base Camp for a well-deserved rest.

Day 16 - Extra day for attempting summit in case of bad weather.

Day 17 and 18 - Trek back to Kothe/ Thuli Kharka

Day 19 - Trek to Lukla 6 (hrs)

In the morning it is all uphill again and we will zig-zag up the steep trail to the Zatra Wala (4580m), the pass which connects to Khumbu Valley. We contour on open slopes to the next pass, the Zatra Og (4490m). Both passes are be-decked with prayer flags and stone cairns. The descent from the Zatra Og can be tricky and if the trail is covered in snow we will have to fix ropes on the initial steep section. Today we will have a packed lunch, which will be taken after we have completed the steepest of the downhill walking. In the afternoon we continue to descend to Lukla

Day 20 - Extra day

Day 21 - Fly to Kathmandu

Day 22 - Free time in Kathmandu

You can spend your free time in Kathmandu for shopping and sightseeing. If you need any help or advise your group leader will be happy to assist you.

Day 23 – Departure

Please note that On your trek, every evening, after dinner, your group leader will describe in detail about your next day's trek and also advise you regarding which clothes and equipment you need to carry in your day pack for the day.



A Day On Your Trek

Although each day is different, considering the weather, general pace of the group and length of the days walk, in general your day begins with a wake up tea at around 6 to 6:30 in the morning. You will then be provided with a bowl of warm water for washing. Then you will need to pack your duffel bag and your daypack and come to the dining tent for breakfast.

After breakfast we will hit the trail and usually walk for about 3 to 4 hrs before we stop for lunch. We will give you about an hour and a half rest during lunch, which will also give enough time for the staff to have their lunch and pack. Usually after 3 to 4 hrs of walking we finish the days walk by 4 PM. Tea/Coffee and snacks will be served on arrival to the camp. Your Group Leader will often organize side trips in the afternoon. Your dinner will be served around 7 PM.



High Altitude

On this trek you will be going up to 6476m, so it is very important to understand the affects of altitude. The greatest provocation is going too high too fast. Hi On Life's itinerary has been carefully designed to minimize the affects of altitude. We ascend slowly and surely allowing enough time for safe acclimatization. Headaches and breathlessness are common at altitude which in itself is nothing to worry about. In rare cases, this may worsen to Acute Mountain sickness (AMS), so a close watch is kept on all trekkers by the group leader who is trained to recognize the symptoms of AMS which are severe headaches, nausea, lethargy, loss of appetite serious breathlessness even at rest. If any trekkers show such signs they will be descended to relatively lower and safer altitude. The Group Leader's decision on evacuating such person to a safe altitude is final. Do not medicate yourself without first informing your group leader. Going to altitude slowly with adequate rest and adequate intake of fluid (3 to 4 litres per day), you will most likely have no problems apart from breathlessness on hills which is completely normal as the percentage of Oxygen in the air is relatively lower to that at sea level. The most important thing is not to worry about altitude because our team is there to take care of you.

Staff

Group leader: your most important member of your staff. Our Group leaders are highly trained in all aspects of the trek, conservation, first aid specializing on altitude sickness, emergency procedures and have extensive knowledge of the natural history of the area.

Sirdar: His job is to manage and organize staff duties. He is responsible for the actual operation of the trek.

Sherpas: Their job is to lead your way and distribute equal loads to the porters.

Cook: Responsible for your food. Hygiene of a high standard is taken into consideration in preparing the food.

Kitchen helpers: Helps the cook in preparing your meal.

Porters: They are responsible to transport your duffle bags and their job finishes once they reach the designated lodge. Our porters are provided with Gore-Tex suits, trekking boots, gloves, hats, socks, snow gaiters and snow goggles. Most importantly, we regulate them on a 25 kg carrying which very few companies do. Our clients can therefore feel comfortable knowing that our porters are working in a good humane condition. During the trek you can see porters carrying 60-70 kg and sometimes even up to 100 kg!!



Weather

Oct/ Nov and March / April

On the trek at lower altitude (2500m to 3500m) during daytime the max temp can be around 22C to 28C and the min temp can be 8C to 15C

At higher altitude (3500m to 5500m) the daytime max temp can be between 17C to 22C and min temp can be between -4C to 8C

Dec to end of Feb

On the trek at lower altitude (2500m to 3500m) during daytime the max temp can be around 15C to 20C and the min temp can be 2C to - 8C

At higher altitude (3500m to 5500m) the daytime max temp can be between 12C to 18C and min temp can be between -4C to -20C. Please note that this is just general information and it could vary marginally.

Our Services

- All internal transportation including both way airfares to Lukla and back to Kathmandu with domestic terminal taxes.
- Services of English or/and Swedish speaking guide.
- Porter's and Sherpa's assistance.
- 4 nights in tourist class hotel on bed and breakfast basis while in Kathmandu.
- Welcome dinner.
- Half day guided city tour with lunch.
- Use of a personal trek pack, consisting of: Duffle bag, down jacket and sleeping bag with a fleece inner-liner.
- Use of climbing equipments: ropes, carabineers, pitons, jumars, ice axe, harness and ascenders and decenders.
- All camping and kitchen facilities.
- All meals while on trek.
- Afternoon tea/coffee service on arrival at camp.
- Boiled and treated water as needed.
- Hilleberg Saivo 3-men tents for twin share.
- All climbing permits and National Park fees.
- Staff insurance, tourist service fee and all taxes applicable as per state law.

Cooks and Food: On our camping trek, our skilful and hard working cooks prepare three hot meals each day with a very healthy diet of fresh vegetables, cheese, egg, fresh meat, tinned fruits, tinned meat and fish (all meat and fish are prepared separately out of respect for the vegetarians in our midst). They also serve a high dose of carbohydrates from breads, rice and pastas. They supply you with unlimited hot-drinks, the key to successful acclimatization. We have weatherproof kitchens and dining tents, with comfortable chairs and tables.

Group Equipments: Hilleberg Saivo 3-men tents for twin share, cooking tent, Hilleberg Atlas dining tent with comfortable tables and chairs, toilet tent, 4 two-way "walkie-talkie" radios, medical kit.

Climbing Equipments: 300 meters of 10 millimetre static "fixing" line, 3 dynamic climbing ropes (8-10 mm, 30-60 meter), 10 meters 6mm rope for sling, locking and standard karabiners, snow stakes (snow-picket), ice axes, jumars, figure 8 descenders, harness, etc.

Please note: the only thing you need to bring for climbing is ice boot and crampons (you can hire them in Kathmandu).

Not Included

- Personal accident and rescue insurance. You must provide your own rescue insurance
- Mineral water, beer, soft drinks and extra tea/coffee outside of normal meal times.
- Private room accommodation in Kathmandu unless a single supplement is paid.
- Optional tips to guides and porters.
- International airport departure taxes.
- Visa costs.
- Helicopter evacuation in the unlikely situation, although we do arrange for it and make the necessary documents so that you can claim from your insurance.

Recommendations for things you should bring:

Water bottle	3 bottles min 1 litre each, should be able to hold hot water
Day pack	medium size 35-40 litres
Sunglasses	
Duct tape	small roll.
Stuff bags	smaller plastic bags to organize you duffle bag
Money belt	
Toiletries	we provide toilet papers
Towel	
Torch	preferably head lamp
Penknife	
Gym shoes/sandals	shoes to wear in camp and in lodges
Sewing kit	
Medical kit	as per your prescriptions. It should be noted that the group leader will be carrying a first aid kit.

Optional

Walking sticks
Cameras
Knee guard for those with bad knees.

Clothing

Trousers:	1 lightweight for easy walking. 1 warmer for colder days preferable wind/water proof. 1 comfortable, warm for lodge/camp
Shorts:	Not too high cut revealing ones
T-shirts:	At least 3 or 4
Hats:	Sunhat and woollen ones for colder days
Gloves:	Woollen and Gore-Tex
Woollen innerliner:	Light weight tops and trousers, preferably woollen, at least 2 pairs
Socks:	At least 4 pairs (both thin and thick woollen ones)
Jackets:	1 fleece and 1 Gore-Tex wind/waterproof. Please note that we provide down jackets.
Shoes:	Trekking boots, preferably waterproof+light gym shoe for camp.

Important gears for climbing

Ice boots & Crampoons:	For climbing. If you don't have them, you can hire them in Kathmandu.
Jacket and Pants:	Waterproof, preferably Gore-Tex suits.
Glacier goggles:	For protection against snow blindness.
Snow gaiters:	If your Gore-Tex pants does not have “snow-lock” system.
Gloves:	Mitten (wool) and a Down one to be worn as combination.
Thick Thermals:	Vest and leggings – preferably woolterry

Healthy and trouble free holiday

There are no compulsory vaccinations required for entering Nepal. However please consult a doctor for vaccination against Typhoid, Meningitis, polio, and hepatitis. If you have special dietary requirements or allergies, please through your agent, give us a list of what you can and can't eat so that we can provide proper food for you.

If you are undergoing a course of prescription medicine, please ensure that you have sufficient supplies for the entire holiday. Some types of drugs including antimalarials have side affects at high altitude; therefore please consult your doctors regarding these drugs. The places you trek are mosquito free and there has been no report on malaria in Kathmandu for the past couple of decades.

Insure yourself

We highly recommend you to take a comprehensive Personal Travel Insurance before leaving home. This should cover for your loss of baggage, airline delays, sickness and accidents. And it should also cover you for Emergency Helicopter Evacuation.

In case of Lukla flight cancellation

Sometimes due to bad weather Lukla flights get cancelled. This may make it difficult for you to connect with international flights. In such an event and if the group as a whole wishes to charter a helicopter, which is an ideal solution to Lukla flight delays, we can arrange for it. You will need to pay about 1000 USD depending on the group size. A covering letter is then issued to each trekker for claims against their travel insurance. Please make sure that your Travel Insurance Policy has coverage for helicopter evacuation.

Money Matters

The ideal currency to bring with you is USD.

In Kathmandu: Each meal will cost around 4 to 6 USD. Plus 10 to 20 USD for your taxis if you wish to go around the city.

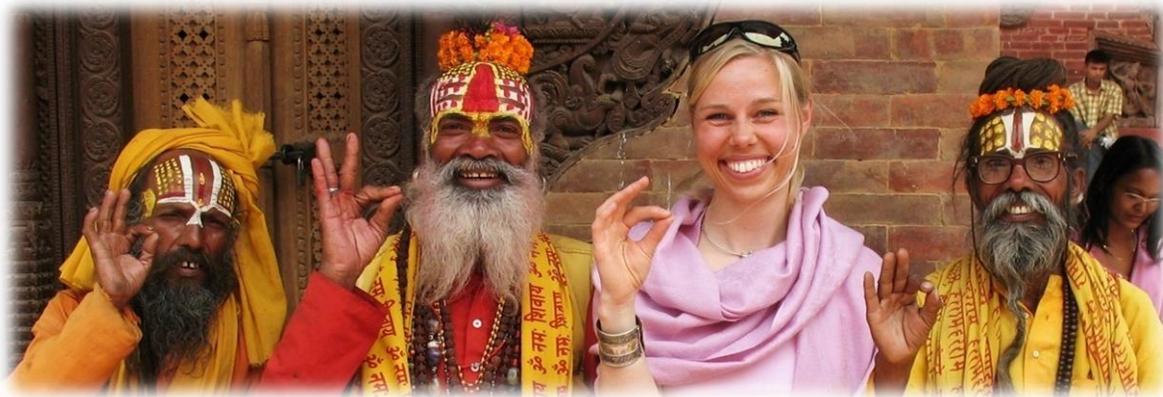
On trek: you will need around 6 to 10 USD per day. This money is for your hot showers, chocolates, soft drinks and beers etc and also for small donations in the monasteries.

Tipping

Although tipping is entirely optional and personal matter the following is recommended as a guideline

In Kathmandu: For bellboys, waiters and porters 20 to 30 Nepali Rupees

On the trek: At the end of the trek it is a customary to tip the field staff. The recommended amount is 100-150 USD depending on group size. The Group leader will collect the tip and then split it between the staff and put it in envelopes so that the trekkers can give it to the staff during the “Farwell Ceremonies”



Some Do's and Don'ts

Nepalese people treat visitors as special guests. Although they will never rebuke you publicly for unknowingly offending them, we must consider their culture. While in Nepal please observe the following:

- Full or partial nudity is not accepted.
- Over display of affection between men and women, especially in temples and monasteries are discouraged.
- Please remove your shoes before entering monasteries and temples.
- Never point the soles of your feet at a person or shrine.
- Many Hindu temples are closed to non-Hindus. Please ask before entering.
- Locals walk around the Mani walls and Stupas in a clockwise direction as a respect and they expect you to do the same although it is not compulsory.

ENJOY!

