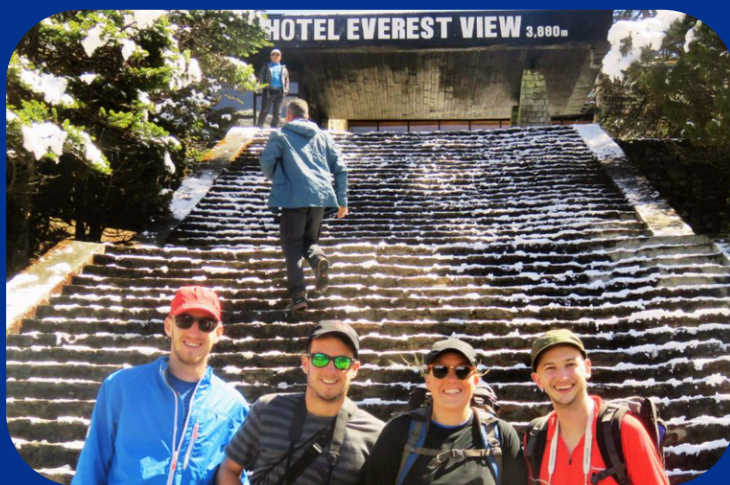
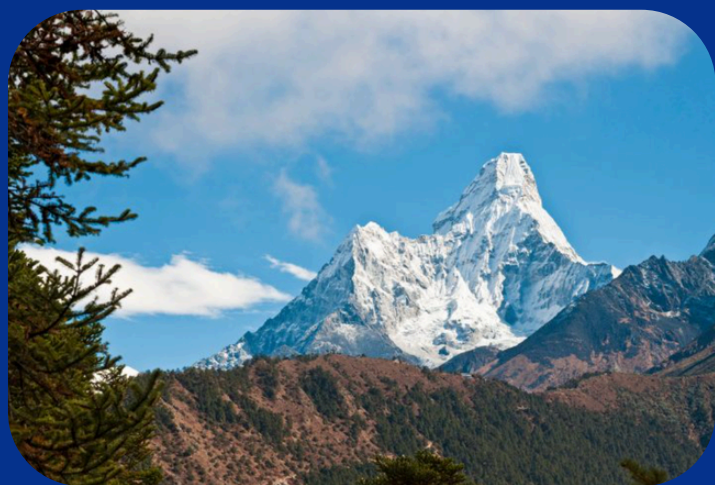




Manaslu Region Trek Guide

Around the eighth-highest mountain on earth

Nine routes compared by duration, altitude, difficulty and permits, from village homestays to a month across three restricted valleys.



CONTENTS

What is inside this guide

Fifteen sections, from choosing a route to packing for it

01	Introduction to Manaslu region treks Location, access, who the region suits	2
02	All Manaslu treks at a glance Every route compared by days, altitude and grade	3
03	Manaslu Circuit Trek Route, day-by-day plan, altitude profile	4
04	Tsum Valley treks Tsum Valley Trek and Manaslu Tsum Valley Trek	6
05	Shorter, easier and more comfortable versions Manaslu Short, Manaslu Luxury, Lower Manaslu	8
06	Long routes and double passes Manaslu Two Passes, Ultimate Manaslu, Rupina La	9
07	Manaslu compared with other regions Manaslu Circuit vs EBC vs Annapurna Circuit	10
08	Trek comparison by category Best for culture, challenge, a short window	11
09	Manaslu region trek routes Villages, junctions and passes, with altitudes	12
10	Difficulty and altitude guide What each grade means, and how acclimatisation works	13
11	Best time for Manaslu treks Season by season, advantages and trade-offs	14
12	Permits and preparation Every permit and fee, guide rule, money, training	15
13	Packing essentials Three-column checklist you can tick off	17
14	Quick trek selection guide A decision table based on the days you have	18
15	Final Manaslu region trek list One-page quick reference for every route	19

Every route in this guide is one we run ourselves. Durations are full package days, from the day you land in Kathmandu to the day you leave. For more information, visit himalayaguidenepal.com.



Introduction to Manaslu region treks

Where it is, what makes it special, and who it suits

Manaslu (8,163 m), the eighth-highest mountain on earth, rises in Gorkha district in central Nepal, between the Annapurna and Ganesh Himal ranges and hard against the Tibetan border. The region opened to foreign trekkers only in the early 1990s, and it is still a restricted area with permit-controlled access.

What makes Manaslu region special

- Far fewer trekkers. In peak season we see roughly 50 to 80 trekkers a day on the Circuit, against several hundred on the Everest Base Camp trail.
- Tibetan Buddhist culture in the Nubri and Tsum valleys that has changed far less than in regions open for decades longer.
- A huge altitude range in one walk, from sal forest at about 800 m in the Budhi Gandaki gorge to glaciers and the 5,106 m Larkya La.
- Manaslu, Himalchuli (7,893 m), Ngadi Chuli (7,871 m), Himlung Himal and Ganesh Himal from the upper trail.



Who can trek in Manaslu Region

Manaslu rewards trekkers who have already done one Himalayan route such as Langtang or Annapurna Base Camp. The Circuit is long, rough in places and crosses a real high pass. Beginners are better served by the Tsum Valley or the Lower Manaslu homestay trek, which stay below 4,000 m.

Getting to Manaslu Region

No domestic flight. The trailhead at Machha Khola is a 6 to 8 hour drive from Kathmandu, and the Circuit exits at Dharapani on the Annapurna side, with a jeep and bus back to Kathmandu or Pokhara.

Restricted area rules apply

Every route that enters the upper Manaslu or Tsum valleys needs a Restricted Area Permit issued through a registered agency, and a licensed guide. Section 12 lists every permit and fee.



All Manaslu treks at a glance

Nine routes, side by side

Use this table to shortlist two routes, then read the detailed profiles that follow. Durations are full package days, from the day you land in Kathmandu to the day you fly out, matching the itineraries on himalayaguidenepal.com.

Trek	Days	Highest point	Difficulty
Lower Manaslu Trek	10	about 3,220 m	Easy
Manaslu Short Trek	11	Larkya La 5,106 m	Strenuous
Tsum Valley Trek	12	Mu Gompa 3,700 m	Moderate
Manaslu Circuit Trek	14	Larkya La 5,106 m	Strenuous
Manaslu Luxury Trek	14	Larkya La 5,106 m	Strenuous
Manaslu Tsum Valley Trek	19	Larkya La 5,106 m	Strenuous
Rupina La Pass Trek	20	Rupina La 4,720 m	Challenging
Manaslu Two Passes Trek	22	Thorong La 5,416 m	Challenging
Ultimate Manaslu Trek	30	Kang La 5,306 m	Challenging



How to read the difficulty column

One grading key runs through every Himalaya Guide Nepal region guide. **Easy:** tops out below 3,500 m. **Moderate:** up to about 4,800 m with no pass above 4,500 m. **Strenuous:** a pass above 4,500 m or time above 5,000 m. **Challenging:** two or more high passes, a trekking peak, or remote camping. Section "Difficulty and altitude guide" explains each grade.



Manaslu Circuit Trek

The classic loop around Manaslu, over the Larkya La

The Circuit follows the Budhi Gandaki gorge north through Gurung and then Tibetan villages to Samagaun, beneath the Manaslu massif. After an acclimatisation day it climbs past Samdo to the stone shelter at Dharamsala, crosses Larkya La before dawn, and descends to Bimthang and the Annapurna side.

DURATION

14 days

DIFFICULTY

Strenuous

START

Machha Khola, by road

HIGHEST POINT

Larkya La 5,106 m

BEST SEASON

Mar – May, Sep – Nov

FINISH

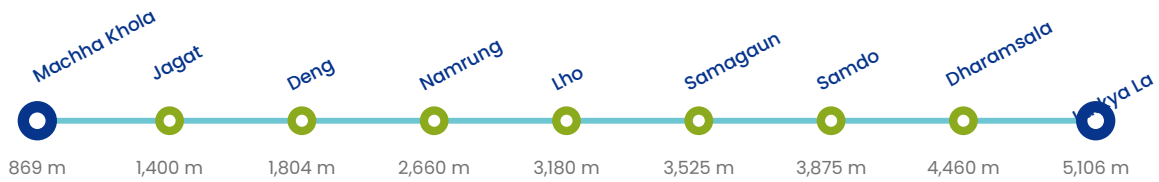
Dharapani, by jeep

Manaslu Circuit Trek Day by day

Day	Route	Sleep at	Walking
1	Arrive Kathmandu	1,350 m	–
2	Drive to Machha Khola	869 m	6 – 8 hrs drive
3	Machha Khola to Jagat	1,400 m	5 – 6 hrs
4	Jagat to Deng via Sirdibas	1,804 m	5 – 6 hrs
5	Deng to Namrung	2,660 m	6 – 7 hrs
6	Namrung to Lho	3,180 m	4 – 5 hrs
7	Lho to Samagaun	3,525 m	3 – 4 hrs
8	Acclimatisation day, hike toward Manaslu Base Camp or Birendra Tal	3,525 m	Short hike
9	Samagaun to Samdo	3,875 m	3 – 4 hrs
10	Samdo to Dharamsala (Larkya Phedi)	4,460 m	3 – 4 hrs
11	Over Larkya La (5,106 m) to Bimthang	3,630 m	8 – 9 hrs
12	Bimthang to Tilije	2,300 m	5 – 6 hrs
13	Tilije to Dharapani	1,960 m	4 – 5 hrs
14	Drive to Kathmandu	1,350 m	Long drive



Manaslu Circuit Trek Altitude Profile



The profile rises gently for six days from 869 m, which makes acclimatisation easier than on routes that start at 2,860 m.



Larkya La is a real pass, not a walk

You leave Dharamsala around 4 am, reach the pass after four to five hours, and face a long, steep descent to Bimthang. Snow and ice are common on the upper section. The pass is most reliably open from March to May and September to November, and we do not cross it in deep winter.



Tsum Valley treks

The hidden valley of happiness

Tsum is a side valley that branches north-east from the Circuit at Philim, known in Buddhist tradition as Beyul Kyimolung, a hidden valley. It was sealed from outside contact for most of its history. The Tsumba people keep their own dialect and farming calendar, and a long-standing local tradition forbids hunting and animal slaughter.

Tsum Valley Trek

Up the Budhi Gandaki to Philim, then north through Chumling and Chhekampar to Nile and Mu Gompa (3,700 m), the highest monastery in the valley. You return via Rachen Gompa nunnery and the caves associated with the Tibetan saint Milarepa. No high pass, and 4 to 6 hours of walking a day.

DURATION
12 days

DIFFICULTY
Moderate

HIGHEST POINT
Mu Gompa 3,700 m

BEST FOR
Culture without extreme altitude



Tsum Valley profile



Festivals in Tsum

Lhosar (Tibetan New Year, February or March) and Saka Dawa (May or June) are celebrated at the valley monasteries. If your dates are flexible, ask us which festivals fall in your window.

Manaslu Tsum Valley Trek

The most complete trip in the region: the Tsum Valley first, then back to the main trail and up to Samagaun, Samdo and over Larkya La to the Annapurna side. Two acclimatisation stops are built in, at Mu Gompa and Samagaun.

DURATION

19 days

DIFFICULTY

Strenuous

HIGHEST POINT

Larkya La 5,106 m

PERMITS

Two restricted permits plus MCAP and ACAP



Shorter, easier and more comfortable versions

For tight schedules, first-timers and softer nights

Manaslu Short Trek

The same route and the same Larkya La crossing, compressed into 11 days by dropping the acclimatisation day and walking longer stages. That makes it a trek for people who already know how they handle altitude, not a beginner shortcut.

DURATION

11 days

DIFFICULTY

Strenuous

HIGHEST POINT

Larkya La 5,106 m

PRIOR EXPERIENCE

Required



Manaslu Luxury Trek

The Circuit with a four-star hotel in Kathmandu, private 4WD transfers, the best available lodges on the trail including private rooms in Namrung and Lho, and a private guide for two. Be clear about what luxury means here: in Samagaun and Samdo the best room is still a basic mountain teahouse, warmer and cleaner than the standard option. The upgrade is comfort at the margins, not a different trek.

DURATION
14 days

DIFFICULTY
Strenuous

HIGHEST POINT
Larkya La 5,106 m

GROUP SIZE
Private, 2 people



Lower Manaslu Trek

A cultural route through the Gorkha hills, starting near Manakamana temple and passing Gorkha Bazaar, Barpak and Laprak to the Dharche Danda viewpoint. Gorkha is where King Prithvi Narayan Shah began the unification of Nepal. Homestays and community lodges, low altitude, and views from Langtang to Annapurna.

DURATION
10 days

DIFFICULTY
Easy

HIGHEST POINT
about 3,220 m

ACCOMMODATION
Homestays and community lodges



SECTION 06

Long routes and double passes

Three weeks and upward

If you have the time, Manaslu links naturally into the Annapurna region and the restricted Nar Phu valley. These routes are for experienced trekkers only.

Manaslu Two Passes Trek

The Circuit over Larkya La, then up the Marsyangdi to Manang and over Thorong La (5,416 m) to Muktinath and Jomsom. Two of the great passes of Nepal in one journey.

DURATION

22 days

HIGHEST POINT

Thorong La 5,416 m

DIFFICULTY

Challenging

PASSES

Larkya La and Thorong La



Ultimate Manaslu Trek

Tsum Valley, the Manaslu Circuit, and the restricted Nar Phu valley over Kang La (5,306 m) in one month-long traverse, finishing in the Annapurna region.

DURATION

30 days

HIGHEST POINT

Kang La 5,306 m

DIFFICULTY

Challenging

PERMITS

Three restricted areas



Rupina La Pass Trek

A camping expedition from Barpak in Gorkha over the Rupina La (4,720 m) into the upper Budhi Gandaki and the Tsum Valley. Almost no other trekkers, and nights under a very dark sky.

DURATION
20 days

DIFFICULTY
Challenging

HIGHEST POINT
Rupina La 4,720 m

ACCOMMODATION
Camping



Manaslu compared with other regions

Where it fits against Everest and Annapurna

	Manaslu Circuit	Everest Base Camp	Annapurna Circuit
Duration	14 days	13 days	16 days
Highest point	Larkya La 5,106 m	Kala Patthar 5,545 m	Thorong La 5,416 m
Domestic flight	No	Yes, Lukla	No
Restricted permit	Yes	No	No
Daily trekkers, peak season	About 50 – 80	Several hundred	High, with road traffic
Acclimatisation profile	Gradual, starts at 869 m	Steep, starts at 2,860 m	Gradual
Teahouses	Basic	Well developed	Mixed, road sections
Culture	Nubri and Tsumba Tibetan Buddhist	Sherpa, busier	Gurung, Manangi, Thakali

The honest trade-off

Manaslu gives you quieter trails and a more intact culture in exchange for basic lodges, higher permit costs, and a long road day at each end. If lodge comfort matters more than solitude, Everest or Annapurna will suit you better.



Trek comparison by category

The short answer, depending on what you want most

BEST CLASSIC TREK

Manaslu Circuit Trek

Fourteen days around the massif, with one of Nepal's great pass days.

BEST FOR CULTURE

Tsum Valley Trek

Monasteries, a nunnery and Milarepa's caves, all below 3,700 m.

BEST COMPLETE TRIP

Manaslu Tsum Valley Trek

Both valleys and the Larkya La in nineteen days.

BEST FOR BEGINNERS

Lower Manaslu Trek

Gorkha history and homestays at low altitude.

BEST FOR ADVENTURE

Ultimate Manaslu Trek

Three restricted valleys and a month on foot.

BEST FOR SOLITUDE

Rupina La Pass Trek

A camping route that almost nobody walks.



Manaslu region trek routes

The villages, junctions and passes you will hear named

Manaslu Circuit, Machha Khola to Larkya La



Major Junctions and Places During Manaslu Region Trek

Place	Altitude	Why it matters
Machha Khola	869 m	Road head and first night on the trail
Jagat	1,400 m	Restricted area checkpoint, where permits are inspected
Philim	about 1,590 m	Where the Tsum Valley trail branches off
Samagaun	3,525 m	Acclimatisation stop, Pungyen Gompa, Birendra Tal and the Manaslu Base Camp hike
Samdo	3,875 m	Last village before the pass, on the old trade route to Tibet
Dharamsala	4,460 m	Basic shelter below Larkya La, the pre-dawn start point
Bimthang	3,630 m	First night after the pass, with views of Manaslu's west face
Dharapani	1,960 m	Where the Circuit joins the Annapurna Circuit trail

Altitudes are the figures in common use on the trail and vary a little between sources and signboards.



Difficulty and altitude guide

What the grades actually mean on the ground

Grade	Daily walking	Top altitude	What it feels like
Easy	4 – 6 hours	Below 3,500 m	Good trail, village nights, no acclimatisation days needed
Moderate	5 – 7 hours	3,500 – 4,800 m, no high pass	Long days, thin air at the top, one acclimatisation stop
Strenuous	5 – 8 hours	A pass above 4,500 m or time above 5,000 m	Cold nights, pre-dawn starts, one or two very long days
Challenging	6 – 9 hours	Two or more high passes, a peak, or remote camping	Snow underfoot, basic facilities, prior altitude experience needed

What Manaslu days feel like

The lower gorge is hot, humid and full of short, steep climbs on rough trail. From Namrung the air cools and the walking gets easier until Samdo. The pass day is 8 to 9 hours with a pre-dawn start, and the descent to Bimthang is steep and loose.

Why the Samagaun day is not a rest day

On the acclimatisation day you climb toward Manaslu Base Camp or Pungyen Gompa and sleep back at 3,525 m. That single day does more to get you over Larkya La safely than any amount of fitness training.

Altitude considerations

- Above 3,000 m, keep sleeping-altitude gains to roughly 300 to 500 m per night.
- Plan a full acclimatisation day for about every 1,000 m of altitude gained.
- Drink far more than feels necessary, three to four litres a day.
- Mild headache, poor appetite and broken sleep are common. A worsening headache, breathlessness at rest, confusion or loss of balance are not, and mean descending straight away.
- Talk to a travel doctor about altitude medication before you leave home, and tell your guide about any medication you carry.

Descent is the treatment

No drug, oxygen bottle or rest day replaces going down. Every itinerary we run has descent options identified in advance, and every guide carries a first aid kit and a way to call for help. Helicopter evacuation depends on weather, which is why travel insurance covering evacuation to the maximum altitude of your trek is a condition of joining any trip in this guide.



Best time for Manaslu treks

Choosing your season, and what each one costs you

Season	Advantages	Disadvantages
Autumn Sep – Nov	Clearest views, Larkya La most reliably open, all lodges running	Highest permit fee, and the busiest (though still quiet) months
Spring Mar – May	Rhododendron forest, warmer nights, lower permit fee	Snow can linger on the pass in March, haze builds in May
Winter Dec – Feb	Very quiet, Tsum and Lower Manaslu remain possible	Larkya La is dangerous in deep snow and some high lodges close. We do not run the Circuit then
Monsoon Jun – Aug	Green valleys, empty trails	Landslides on the road and lower trail, leeches, cloud over the peaks



Permits and preparation Manaslu Region Trek

Paperwork, logistics and getting your body ready

Permits For Manaslu Trekking

Permit	Needed for	2026 fee
Manaslu Restricted Area Permit	Circuit and every route through Samagaun	US\$100 per week Sep – Nov, US\$75 per week Dec – Aug
Tsum Valley Restricted Area Permit	Tsum Valley routes	US\$40 for 7 days Sep – Nov, US\$30 Dec – Aug, then US\$7 per day
Manaslu Conservation Area Permit	Every route in the region	NPR 3,000
Annapurna Conservation Area Permit	Routes that exit via Dharapani	NPR 3,000
Local municipality permit	Collected on the trail	Small local fee

Fees shown are the rates published for 2026 and can change without notice. Restricted Area Permits are issued only through a registered agency, can now be processed before you arrive using your visa details, and are checked at Jagat and Philim. Group-size rules for restricted permits have been revised recently, and we confirm the current position in writing when you book.



Licensed guide rule

Since April 2023, foreign trekkers in Nepal's national parks and conservation areas must walk with a licensed guide arranged through a registered agency. Restricted areas have always required one. We provide licensed guides for solo travellers and groups of every size, and we confirm the current rules in writing when you book.



Money and accommodation During Manaslu Trekking

Nothing above Machha Khola takes cards, so carry enough Nepali rupees for the whole trek. Teahouses are simpler than on Everest or Annapurna: shared rooms, shared toilets, and dal bhat as the dependable meal. Bring a sleeping bag rated to minus 15 Celsius for the upper valley.

Manaslu Trekking Travel insurance Requirement

Your policy must cover trekking to the maximum altitude of your itinerary and must include helicopter evacuation and repatriation. Many standard travel policies stop at 3,000 or 4,000 m. Read the altitude clause, not the summary.



How to Do Physical preparation For Manaslu Circuit Trek

- Start eight to twelve weeks out. Consistency beats intensity.
- Uphill walking with a loaded pack is the most useful training there is. Flat cardio alone does not prepare you for the stairs.
- Add two or three cardio sessions a week, and one long walk of four hours or more at the weekend.
- Break your boots in properly. Blisters end more treks than altitude does.
- If you have a heart, lung or blood pressure condition, get medical clearance before booking.



Packing essentials For Manaslu Trekking

Tick as you pack. Aim for 10 to 12 kg in the porter bag

CLOTHING	FOOTWEAR AND GEAR	HEALTH AND EXTRAS
☐ Base layers, 2 sets ☐ Fleece or midlayer ☐ Down jacket ☐ Waterproof shell jacket ☐ Waterproof trousers ☐ Trekking trousers, 2 ☐ Trekking shirts, 3 ☐ Warm hat and sun hat ☐ Buff or neck gaiter ☐ Liner and insulated gloves ☐ Underwear and sports bras ☐ Trekking socks, 4 pairs	☐ Broken-in trekking boots ☐ Camp shoes or sandals ☐ Gaiters, for pass routes ☐ Trekking poles ☐ Daypack, 30 to 35 L ☐ Duffel bag for the porter ☐ Dry bags or pack liner ☐ Sleeping bag (see rating below) ☐ Sleeping bag liner ☐ Headtorch and spare batteries ☐ Microspikes or crampons, pass routes only	☐ Sunscreen, factor 50 ☐ SPF lip balm ☐ Category 4 sunglasses ☐ Personal medication ☐ Blister kit and tape ☐ Rehydration salts ☐ Water bottles, 2 to 3 L ☐ Purification tablets or filter ☐ Quick-dry towel ☐ Wet wipes and hand sanitiser ☐ Power bank, 20,000 mAh ☐ Universal adapter ☐ Passport, permits, insurance ☐ Cash in Nepali rupees

Manaslu-specific additions

Microspikes for Larkya La, a spare headtorch battery for the 4 am start, and two photocopies of your passport and permits for the checkpoints.



Quick trek selection guide

Start with the days you have, not the trek you have heard of

Have 10 days and no altitude experience?	Lower Manaslu Trek, 10 days
Have 11 days and altitude experience?	Manaslu Short Trek
Want culture, not a pass?	Tsum Valley Trek, 12 days
Have two weeks?	Manaslu Circuit Trek, 14 days
Want both valleys?	Manaslu Tsum Valley Trek, 19 days
Want two great passes?	Manaslu Two Passes Trek, 22 days
Have a month?	Ultimate Manaslu Trek, 30 days



Two questions that settle most of it

Have you trekked above 4,000 m before? If not, choose Tsum or Lower Manaslu first, or start with Langtang or Annapurna Base Camp and come back for the Circuit.

How much do lodge comforts matter to you? If a warm room matters more than an empty trail, look at the Luxury version or at Annapurna.



Final Manaslu region trek list

One page. Print it, or keep it on your phone

Trek	Days	Highest point	Difficulty	Best season	Main highlight
Lower Manaslu	10	3,220 m	Easy	All but monsoon	Gorkha history, homestays
Manaslu Short	11	5,106 m	Strenuous	Autumn, spring	Larkya La in 11 days
Tsum Valley	12	3,700 m	Moderate	Autumn, spring	Mu Gumpa, Milarepa caves
Manaslu Circuit	14	5,106 m	Strenuous	Autumn, spring	Samagaun and Larkya La
Manaslu Luxury	14	5,106 m	Strenuous	Autumn, spring	Best lodges, private guide
Manaslu Tsum Valley	19	5,106 m	Strenuous	Autumn, spring	Both valleys and the pass
Rupina La Pass	20	4,720 m	Challenging	Autumn, spring	Camping from Barpak
Manaslu Two Passes	22	5,416 m	Challenging	Oct – Nov, Apr – May	Larkya La and Thorong La
Ultimate Manaslu	30	5,306 m	Challenging	Oct – Nov, Apr – May	Tsum, Manaslu and Nar Phu



Ready to pick one?

Send us your dates and the two routes you are weighing up, and we will come back with a day-by-day itinerary, a firm price and the current permit position. WhatsApp +977 9851193013 or info@himalayaguidenepal.com. We would rather talk you onto the right trek than sell you the famous one.

Altitudes, durations and seasons reflect our standard itineraries and commonly published figures, which vary a little between maps and signboards. Conditions on the ground, permit fees and regulations change. Confirm current details with us before you travel.





Plan your trek with people who live here

Himalaya Guide Nepal is a Nepali-owned trekking company based in Kathmandu, running guided treks and peak climbs across Everest, Annapurna, Manaslu, Langtang, Ruby Valley and Nepal's restricted areas. This guide covers the Annapurna region. Every itinerary in this guide can be adjusted to your dates, pace and budget.

himalayaguidenepal.com | WhatsApp +977 9851193013 | info@himalayaguidenepal.com

