

Upper Dolpo Trek

Url: <https://www.glorioushimalaya.com/trekking-and-hiking/upper-dolpo-trekking/>

Duration

24

Max. Altitude

5,350m

Difficulty

Challenging

Group Size

Min 2 Pax

Per Person Cost

USD 4500

Transport

Plane, Jeep, Car

Meals

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Accommodation

Hotel, Lodge, Tent

Starts At

Kathmandu

Ends At

Kathmandu

Highlights

- Adventurous camping trek to the remote trans Himalayan region of Nepal.
- Superb view of Kanjirowa Himal, crystal Mountain and many more.
- Visit ancient monasteries of Dolpo district.
- Explore remote areas of the western region.
- Observe Unique Tibetan Buddhist culture
- Discover the wild west of Nepal Himalaya.
- Visit UNESCO world cultural heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley.
- Crossing Kang La (5350m) and Jyagla pass
- Explore mesmerizing Phoksundo Lake (Deepest lake of Nepal)

Overview

UPPER DOLPO TREK- 24 DAYS...*stark landscapes, raw beauty & gripping culture that stuns the senses...*

Upper Dolpo trekking is probably the most trailblazing trek that takes you to one of the most far corner regions of Nepal. Dolpa district is geographically situated near the Tibetan border of [Nepal](#). It is located northwest of the Karnali region. It was only since the 1980s, when this region was opened for trekkers and foreigners. In Peter Matheson's book named "The Snow Leopard", he describes about his journey through the stark ascetic land of Dolpo. This region is very rich in ethnic Tibetan arts, customs and traditions. As mostly Tibetans are settled here for centuries...nature here is pungent & real pure wilderness...

If you are wondering about how this place would be, then you can watch the film 'Himalaya' or 'Caravan' for your reference. It is the first English subtitle movie filmed in Nepal. The [caravan](#) was shot in the [Dolpo region](#) and this was also an Oscar-nominated movie of 1999. Upper Dolpo is a region of supernatural beauty and its distance adds to the sense of adventure among its visitors. Dolpa or Dolpo seeps into a mystic magic land. Upper Dolpo Trekking region amazes visitors at every turn of the trail; customs and traditions here are very similar to those of Tibet. It requires special permits, for 10 days that charge USD 500. After 10 days the cost comes down to USD \$50 each day. For this trek, there should be at least two people &/or more to get trekking permits.

Itinerary

Day 01: Arrival in Kathmandu - (1400m)

You will be warmly welcomed at the airport by our office representative and then you will transfer to hotel. Our staff will give a brief explanation about the program. This day you can stay within the hotel or enjoy the night at Thamel, Kingsway especially famous for clubs and bars.

Day 02: Kathmandu sightseeing tour

This day, you will visit many cultural heritages, which includes some of the famous world's heritages like Pashupatinath, Swyambhunath, Kathmandu Durbar Square, Bouddhanath stupa and many more. You can do the shopping for various Nepalese cultural stuff on this day. And Back to the hotel for overnight.

Day 03: Flight to Nepalgunj - (150m) - 45 minutes flight

Today, we fly to the western side of Nepal. It is about a 1-hour flight from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj. Situated nearby the Nepal-India border, Nepalgunj offers you the taste of both Hindu and Muslim cultures. Overnight at our hotel inclusive B. L. D

Day 04: Flight to Juphal (2475m) - 1 hour flight

After our breakfast, we will catch another flight to reach Juphal. It will consume about 45 minutes to reach to Juphal with a scenic view of the mountains. On arriving at Juphal our trekking crew will receive you, these guys have done a tough hike all the way from Nepalgunj with the camping gear and food

supply which take about 5-6 days. We bunk out here for the night with all meals inclusive

Day 05: Trek to Chhepka (2838m) - 6 hrs Walk

We start trekking from Dunai, cross the big steel suspension bridge and turn west, following the trail past the hospital, and then it's a level walk along the bank of the Thulo Bheri to its confluence with the Suli Gaad at 2070m. We follow the new trail north up the east bank of the Suli Gaad to a collection of teashops run by the wives of army personnel in Dunai.

Another hour of walking takes us to Kal Rupi and then on to Raktang (2260m). We cross to the west bank and trek past numerous goths and horse pastures, over a ridge to the rough stone houses of Jyalhasa, a wintering spot for the people of Ringmo.

We keep walking upstream to another bridge, cross it to the east bank, and make our way past some crude teashops and a bridge over a side stream, the Ankhe Khola, at 2460m. The trail moves up and down through grass and ferns to a trail junction. The fork is the old trail leading to the army and national park post at Ankhe, and on to the old trail that passes the villages of Rahagoan and Parela, high on the ridge above.

These three villages have a strange name connection: Parela Rahagoan and Ankhe. The trail Phoksumdo Lake climbs over a ridge at 2710m and then descends on a rocky path to Chepka (2670m), which is inhabited by three brothers and consists of a collection of interconnected shops, rakshi stalls, and lodges. We camp here or at another good spot beside a huge rock in a walnut grove about 20 minutes beyond Chepka, with all meals inclusive

Day 06: Trek to Palam (3820m) - 6/7 hrs Walk

To reach Palam, we have to pass through beautiful forest, following a river. We have to ascend sometimes and descend sometimes. On the way we can see the local people with their mules as dzopas (cross bread of Yak and Cow), loaded with thongs to sell.

After 4 hrs we will reach Reechi village, leaving behind Reechi we will reach Chumuwar after 2 hrs. There is Amchi Hospital; an Amchi is a doctor who is educated in traditional Tibetan medicine. You can have treatment from herbs and numerals. Interested person can donate for this Hospital. Overnight in tented camps, inclusive of full board meals.

Day 07: Trek to Phoksundo Lake (3620m) - 4 hrs Walk

We continue downstream to the national park headquarters at Sumduwa before joining the trail up the Phoksumdo Khola to Phoksumdo Lake. We climb through a forest of large cedars to the winter settlement of Palam and continue ascending through the open country to a ridge from which there are good views of the lake in the distance. Close by is a fabulous waterfall, the highest waterfall in Nepal.

The trail then makes an initial descent before climbing gently to Ringmo village. After crossing a bridge below Ringmo, the trail continues northwards to the shores of Phoksumdo Lake. Hereabouts we camp out in tents with all meals inclusive

Day 08: Exploring Day / Acclimatization Day

Today is a rest day at the lake which is known for its unusual greenish-blue coloring. It is overlooked on the western side, by a prominent snowy peak known as Kanjirolba or Kanchen Ruwa. A trail leads through a stand of juniper trees to an old dilapidated gumpa that overlooks the lake.

We find Buddhist paintings and statues at this gumpa; there is also evidence of the ancient Bon-Po religion within the temple and chapels. This is also part of the film 'Caravan' that was shot. Overnight in our tents with all meals inclusive

Day 09: Trek to Salla Ghari (3640m) - 5/6 hrs Walk

This day, we will enter the restricted area of Upper Dolpo. We will follow the famous trail where the famous movie called CARAVAN of Eric Valli was cast. This trail is used by peoples of Dolpo and other trade with Tibetans. It is adventurous to pass through the trail. When we reach the top we will have a beautiful view of Lane Ringmo, the dark green pine forests and snow-capped mountain to the South. We will have to descend first and ascend through a wide valley which will let us have a spectacular view of Kanjirowa Himal (66612m) then we will reach an alpine area with junipers called Thaneba or Lakeside camp, a beautiful place of camping. Overnight at tented camp, inclusive of full board meal.

Day 10: Trek to Lar Tsa (4120m) - 6 hrs Walk

We begin the day along the level path that now heads north through a glacial valley. We then cross to the east bank of Phoksundo Khola. We follow the main valley for another hour to Kang Gumpa. We climb steeply from Kang Gumpa and stay on the grassy ridge.

It's a long climb up the ridge past a few groves of birch trees. There are spectacular mountain views with Shey Shikar (6,139m) and Kang Chunne (6,443m) dominating the skyline to the west. We continue on a crest at 4,200m then the route descends gently on a rocky trail to Lar Tsa, a camp site besides the river at 4120m.

It's possible to continue walking, but we have now ascended more than 5,00m in a day and should spend the night at Lar Tsa for acclimatization. Overnight in our tents with all meals inclusive

Day 11: Trek to Shey Gumpa (4320m) - 7/8 hrs Walk

We continue on the route that follows the upper reaches of the Phoksumdo Khola, and then we turn north towards the peak of Riwo Drugdra (Crystal Mountain). There is a choice of trails here; we follow the more scenic pilgrim route across the Sehu La to the west of Crystal Mountain, making a kora (circumambulation) of this sacred peak.

The Dolma trail turns north soon after camp while the pilgrim trail starts up a steep screen slope on the opposite side of a stream that flows from the north. After a long pull to Sehu La (also known as Mendok Ding La) at 5160m the trail descends a screen slope to a grassy meadow besides a stream valley and begins a series of long ascents and descends across ridges in and out of side valleys as it traverses around Crystal Mountain.

After a steep, rough climb to a crest at 5,010m and another at 4,860m, we begin the descent to the Tar valley. Soon after the route reaches grassy slopes, a side trail leads to Tsakang, a gompa said to be 800years that is perched dramatically on the side of a cliff. The final descent is on a wide trail to a campsite in a large meadow near a few huts of nomads at 4310, just below Shey gompa. This is where we crash out for the night with all meals inclusive

Day 12: Acclimatization day at Shey Gompa

Today is another acclimatization day at Shey Gompa. Cross the river on a log bridge and climb past a big Chorten and a huge field of mani stones to the Shey gompa compound at 4390m. The gompa itself is not large, and there are no artifacts or paintings of notes inside. Although the building is said to be 800years old, the wall paintings are relatively recent, probably done in 1970s. The statues on the altar are of Guru Rinpoche, Sakyamuni and Milarepa.

The gompa also houses an ancient Tibetan scroll that describes the myth of Crystal Mountain and Shey gompa. According to the inscription, there is a holy lake in a crater among the mountains that surrounds Shey. When a pilgrim makes nine circumambulations of this lake the water turns milky. A sip of this milk and the pilgrim can see Mt Kailash in the distance. The ones who don't need a day of rest can try to find this lake. We bunk out here for the night with all meals inclusive

Day 13: Trek to Namgung (4430m) - 6 hrs Walk

We trek east from Shey gompa and across the 5,010m Shey La. Here we turn north and descend before climbing again to Namgung (4430m).

We get a stunning view of the northern Tibetan plateau, the highest plateau in the world, as we travel over the Glen pass. We can see Mustang out in the east. To get to Namgung's meadows, we must descend after passing across the pass. Namgung residents provide a warm welcome to us. It is a lovely location with a welcoming atmosphere.

We haul up here for the night with all meals inclusive.

Day 14: Trek to Saldang (4046m) - 3 hrs Walk

Our Trek to Saldang starts with climbing a tree slope. We have to ascend to 4,700m before going down steep slopes to the picturesque village of Saldang, situated on a plateau high above the Nam Khong Nala and the biggest villages of the lower Dolpo area. The village is prosperous, not only agriculturally but also for its strategic location on a trade route to Tibet. Overnight in tented Camps inclusive of full board meals.

Day 15: Trek to Sibü (4000m) - 6 hrs Walk

We will leave Saldang village and on way to Sibü we have to pass through terraced fields, Stupas, Chortens mani, and a Chaiba monastery. Namdo, the next village contains sixty houses having nearly four hundred inhabitants. It stretches 5km on the high slopes to the left of Nam Khong Khola. We will set

camp near the small settlement of Sibu, right on the river bank. Overnight at tented camp inclusive of full board meals.

Day 16: Trek to the foot of the Jengla (4480m) - 4/5 hrs Walk

We will follow the line of the river valley and the trail is easy going initially. But after two hours, we must make another stream before turning into the side valley where the rise becomes very sharp. Overnight at tented camp with the full board of meals.

Day 17: Trek to Tokyo Gaon (4240m) - 6/7 hrs Walk

To reach to Tokyo Gaon we have to cross the Jeng La which is about 4850m. It will take about 2 hrs to climb to reach the top of Jeng La. From the top of the peak we can have good views of Dhaulagiri, beautiful goldy views in the morning then we will descend towards Tarap valley. By the after we will see green valley which leads us by a beautiful trail down. Towards Tarap Chu. Tarap is a spectacular valley with vast plants in high mountains extending to twenty kilometers along the Tarap Chu River. It consists of ten villages with cultivated fields, many Gompas, and Chhortens. Overnight at tented camp with the full board of meals.

Day 18: Trek to Dho Tarap (4200m) - 2 hrs Walk

Our morning walk begins with a gradual up leading us to Kamattarka at the confluence of the Tarap Chu and Lang Khola, a stream flowing from the east. After a few hours of good morning hiking, we leave the narrow gorge & from here the path leads just above tree lines of juniper bush and wild rose, typical of dry inner Himalayan valleys. Another 3 hours or more walking brings us to the village of Dho Tarap surrounded by an irregular stone wall. At Dho, thirty-four houses are divided into three groups and built-in random fashion, it's pretty interesting! In this Valley, both Bon Po and Chaiba sects reside together. Tarap is also inhabited by a few Tibetans and mostly Magars who have lived here for many generations. Overnight Camp by the village yard with all meals.

Day 19: Trek to Serkam (3623m) - 7 hrs Walk

The next two days are longish with a choice of several different campsites so the itinerary can be flexible. Your route follows the course of the Tarap Khola, generally downhill. You go through narrow gorges with the river rushing through. One may see blue sheep, marmots, yaks, sheep, and goats and perhaps meet people from Dolpo taking their flocks of sheep and goats to lower pastures for the winter. The afternoon brings more undulations in the path when it leaves the immediate course of the river. There is evidence of improvements to the trail where parts of the rock have been blasted out. You will also see the first of the modern steel suspension bridges which have been built to facilitate the movement of people and animals. The track is very narrow in places. Overnight at tented camp, inclusive of full board meal.

Day 20: Trek to Tarakot (2280m) - 5 hrs Walk

You leave Khanigoan 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 are quite demanding and one bridge, said to have 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, chilies, 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 Barbing 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 at tented camp, inclusive of full board meal.

Day 21: Trek to Dunai (2109m) - 5 hrs Walk

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. All too soon you have reached the village of Dunai and the campsite you used before. You will now have completed the circuit and can mark the occasion with a celebration party! Overnight at tented camp, inclusive of full board meal.

Day 22: Trek to Juphal (2475m) - 3 hrs Walk

You now retrace your steps to Juphal. Initially, the way is flat but the final hour up to your destination seems steeper than you remember on Day One! Camp overnight on the grounds of one of the lodges. Overnight at tented camp, inclusive of full board meal.

Day 23: Flight to Kathmandu via Nepalgunj

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. You then connect with the flight back to Kathmandu. Overnight at hotel, inclusive of breakfast.

Day 24: Departure from Nepal

Today is your departure day, we will drop you to the International airport to catch your flight back to your home and pray for your Safe journey.

Trip Includes

- All the required airport and hotel transfers by private vehicles.
- 3 nights of twin sharing 3-star standard hotel accommodations in Kathmandu city inclusive breakfast.
- 19 nights of twin sharing tented accommodations while on the trek.
- 1 night of twin sharing standard hotel accommodation in Nepalgunj inclusive breakfast.
- 1 day Kathmandu sightseeing tour guided by a city tour guide with private transport.
- Full board meals prepared by our expert trekking cook while on the trek. (breakfast, lunch & dinner)
- All the essentials camping gears such as tents, mattresses, kitchen utensils etc.
- Highly experienced and government certified local trekking guide for the trek.
- Required supporting local porters and donkeys to carry foods, camping equipments and luggages.
- All the essential trekking permits and official paperwork for the trek.
- All the required domestic airfares and airport taxes.
- Food /Salary/accommodation and medical and accidental insurance of all the local trekking staffs.
- Waterproof duffel bag and sleeping bags to use while on the trek. (provide on request)
- First aid medical kits with an oximeter to check your pulse and oxygen level while on the trek.
- Trip achievement certificate after the successful trip completion.
- Nepalese cuisine farewell dinner at a typical local restaurant with a cultural dance show.
- All government taxes and company service charge.

Trip Exclude

- International airfares and Nepal entry visa fees.
- Lunch and dinner in Kathmandu hotel.
- Entrance fees for the Kathmandu sightseeing tour.
- Your travel insurance.
- Alcoholic beverages, bottled mineral water, soft drinks and snack foods while on the trek.
- Gratitude for the guide and porters.
- Extra hotel accommodations if other than the scheduled itinerary.

Checklist

Trekking Gear Checklist

Head

- Bandana or headscarf, also useful for dusty conditions.
- Warm hat that covers your ears (wool or synthetic)
- Headlamp with extra batteries and bulbs.
- Sunglasses with UV protection
- Prescription sunglasses (if required)

Upper Body

- Polypropylene shirts (1 half sleeve and 2 long sleeves)
- Light and expedition weight thermal tops.
- Fleece wind-stopper jacket or pullover.
- Waterproof shell jacket (preferably breathable fabric)
- Down jacket
- Gore-Tex jacket with hood, waterproof and breathable

Hands

- 1 pair of lightweight poly-liner gloves.
- 1 pair of lightweight wool or fleece gloves.
- 1 pair of mittens, consists of 1 Gore-Tex over mitt matched with a very warm polar-fleece mitt liner (seasonal)

Lower Body

- Non-cotton underwear briefs.
- 1 pair of hiking shorts.
- 1 pair of hiking trousers.
- 1 pair of lightweight thermal bottoms (seasonal)
- 1 pair of fleece or woolen trousers
- 1 pair of waterproof shell pants, breathable fabric

Feet

- 2 pairs of thin, lightweight inner socks.
- 2 pairs of heavy poly or wool socks.
- 1 pair of hiking boots with spare laces (sturdy, soles, water resistant, ankle support, "broken in")
- 1 pair of trainer or running shoes/sandals
- Cotton socks (optional)
- Gaiters (winter only), optional, "low" ankle high version

Sleeping

- 1 sleeping bag (-20 degrees)
- Fleece sleeping bag liner (optional)

Rucksack and Travel Bags

- 1 medium rucksack (50-70 liters/3000-4500 cubic inches, can be used for an airplane carryon)
- 1 large duffel bag
- A small daypack/backpack for carrying your valuables should have good shoulder padding
- Small padlocks for duffel-kit bags
- 2 large waterproof rucksack covers (optional)

Medical

- Small, personal first-aid kit. (Simple and light)

- Aspirin, first-aid tape, and plasters (Band-Aids)
- 1 skin-blister repair kit
- Anti-diarrhea pills
- Anti-headache pills
- Cough and/or cold medicine
- Anti-altitude sickness pills: Diamox or Acetylzolamide
- Stomach antibiotic: Ciprofloxacin, etc. Do not bring sleeping pills as they are a respiratory depressant.
- Water purification tablets or water filter.
- 1 set of earplugs
- Extra pair of prescription glasses, contact lens supplies.

Practical Items

- 1 small roll of repair tape, 1 sewing-repair kit
- 1 cigarette lighters, 1 small box of matches
- 1 compass or GPS (optional)
- 1 alarm clock/watch
- 1 digital camera with extra cards and batteries
- Large Ziplocs
- 2 water bottles (1 ltrs. each)
- 1 small folding knife
- Binoculars (optional)
- 4 large, waterproof, disposable rubbish sacks.

Toiletries

- 1 medium-sized quick-drying towel
- Toothbrush/paste (preferably biodegradable)
- Multi-purpose soap (preferably biodegradable)
- Deodorants
- Nail clippers
- Face and body moisturizer
- Female hygiene products
- Small mirror

Personal Hygiene

- Wet wipes (baby wipes)
- Tissue/toilet roll
- Anti-bacterial hand wash

Extras/Luxuries

- Reading books
- Trail map/guide book
- Journal and pen
- iPod
- Travel game i.e. chess, backgammon, scrabble, playing cards (to help you pass the time at teahouses or camps)

- 1 modest swimsuit
- Voltage converter
- Plug adapter (2 round pegs to 2 flat pegs)
- Lightweight pillowcase (in case if your teahouses do not provide you)

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