

# Upper Mustang Trek

**Duration:** 21 Days

**Starts At:** Kathmandu

**Grade:** Moderate

**Accommodation:** Hotels And Lodges  
During The Trek

**Transport:** Flight/Land Transportation

**Altitude:** 4200m

**Ends At:** Kathmandu

**Group Size:** Minimum 2 Pax

**Meals:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

## Highlights

- Hike along the Trans-Himalayan Region and ancient trading route to Tibet.
- Explore ancient monasteries, caves and Buddhist shrines
- Breathtaking mountain views of Annapurna, Nilgiri and Dhaulagiri
- Visit Ancient Chhoser caves where 44 living rooms.
- Experienced the real Tibetan culture and religion.

## Overview

**Upper Mustang Trek** lies to the north of the [Annapurna area](#) at an altitude of 4,000m in the Dhaulagiri Zone. Mustang is the hinterland enriched with mainly barren ridges, deep canyons, eroded cliffs and Moraine valleys. Its landscape is unequalled for it has an astonishing wilderness, untouched scenery, snow-capped peaks, fabulous 16th-century monasteries and many other exclusive attractions. The view of windswept Kali-Gandaki valley, vast spaces around Kagbeni and vast ridgelines that sprawl high mountains provide an emotional experience hard to find.

Hereabouts, villages follow a Tibetan pattern with most houses whitewashed a glimmering white. Lo Manthang is the hub of Mustang district which was once an independent kingdom with its own rulers. An ancient town, Lo is walled in which forms a ring around the village town. The rugged landscapes in **Upper Mustang Trek** are a treat for visitors who trek around here and are a stark reminder of the Grand Canyon in the USA. The old culture which follows an ancient form of Buddhism is a great matter of interest to most trekkers who come to visit this mysterious region. Hikers experience gripping visits to monasteries of yore, Buddhist shrines that tell a story with many gompas & mandalas. The Mustangi live their lives unique to themselves & keep

surprising backpackers to no ends, one of these is a tradition where a single girl is married to 3 brothers from the same family, which we all know as 'Polyandry'.

Mustang is the old kingdom of Lo. Actually, the capital of the Mustang district is Jomsom, but the real Tibetan style district lies north of Kagbeni and is usually referred to as Upper Mustang. The actual capital, Lo Manthang, where the present king lives, is a fantastic square-walled town sitting on the 'Plain of Prayers'. The small kingdom of Mustang, closed to westerners until 1992, is an enchanting land of windswept vistas, red walled monasteries, and ancient feudal towns that now live in peace.

Upper Mustang falls in the rain shadow region of Nepal, and hence, trekkers also can visit upper Mustang in the rainy season. About a decade ago, organized camping or tent treks were only available, now, simple warm tea houses are found on the trail. The people of Mustang call themselves Lobas, and they have a King only in name called Jigme Palbar Bista. After Nepal was declared a republic in 2007, the Nepal Government took back the official recognition of Bista as the Mustangi King. However, the local folks still respect him as their King or tribe-leader. Bista also grants the audience to visitors on request.

***Upper Mustang was a restricted area till 1992 for foreign visitors and outsiders. Today, foreigners are allowed but can only enter Upper Mustang after they buy a special permit of US\$ 500 for ten days. The trip to Mustang is only arranged by licensed trekking companies in Nepal.***

Check out our standard itinerary for **Upper Mustang Treks** or [contact us](#) if you need a program that matches your time frame, we'll be glad to help you.

## **Itinerary**

### **Day 1 : Arrival in Kathmandu (1,360m)**

After your arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport in medieval and modernized Kathmandu, you will be warmly greeted by our office representative and transferred to the hotel. After check in and some refreshments, our senior Sherpa guide will come to meet you and give you a brief orientation about Upper Mustang Trekking. You can then go for a stroll down the street to get familiar with the neighbourhood, have supper and go to bed. This is your first overnight in the valley of temples and cows, probably the most in the world.

### **Day 2 : Kathmandu Sightseeing and preparation for the trek**

The capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu, being the historical and cultural heart of the country, is a popular destination for tourists, trekkers and other types of adventure seekers. The city is a marvelous amalgamation of Hinduism, Tibetan Buddhism and Western cultures and influences. Patan and Bhaktapur are its two major neighboring

cities. These two cities, like Kathmandu, have a rich historical, cultural and religious legacy which is reflected in the many temples, monuments and artifacts that they contain. You will be taken on a half-day guided tour of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur cities. In Kathmandu, you will be visiting Pashupatinath, the most famous and revered Hindu shrine in the country; Boudhanath, the largest Buddhist stupa in Nepal, Soyambhunath, which contains both Buddhist and Hindu shrines and stands as testimony to the religious harmony that exists in the country; and the 15th-century 55-window palace in Bhaktapur. An orientation session for the trek, which commences the following day, will be organized in the evening.

### **Day 3 : Fly or drive to Pokhara, this is optional**

After breakfast, we leave our hotel early morning for a drive with scenic views along the road to Pokhara via Prithivi national highway. The drive could take roughly 7-8 hrs to reach Pokhara. We also have the option for a flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara for 35 minutes. We will visit some prime spots in the lake city after refreshing at our hotel we will do a tour of some beautiful places in Pokhara that include Davids fall (if we reach early by road), and the Phewa Lake etc. we then do an overnight at our hotel by the lake in the lovely 'city of lakes' on BB Plan.

### **Day 4 : Flight to Jomsom (2,710m) and trek to Kagbeni (2,800m) - 3 hrs trek**

You take the early morning flight which again will give close-up views of the Annapurna range, Dhaulagiri and nearby satellites, 20 minutes flight in a small aircraft. Directly north of Jomsom is the pretty village of Kagbeni, Where there are about 80 families living here, most of them traders who are the link in the chain between modern Nepal and the Tibetan-type people of Mustang. Just out of Jomsom you cross a small hanging bridge and then walk along the banks of the Kali Gandaki. The trail is pretty barren with craggy rocks and sand and is mostly flat, which makes it very easy going. This very easy, enjoyable start is at the same time picturesque, with views of big peaks all around such as Dhaulagiri (26,794ft), Tukucho (22,703ft) and in the west the awesome mountain above Kagbeni, Nilgiri (22,769ft). Over to the south and south-west can be seen the entire Annapurna Massif. You are more than likely to meet Indian pilgrims on their way to and from Muktinath on this stretch, and other Europeans for an hour or two who will be on the world-famous Annapurna Circuit. Upon reaching Kagbeni there is a taste of scenes to come in Upper Mustang, what with its narrow alleyways and tunnels, irrigation canals, green fields of wheat and barley and a large red gompa. At the police check-post at the north end of the village there is a sign saying 'Restricted area, tourists please do not go beyond this point'. Here you will complete your paperwork formalities for you to enter this long-forbidden region of Nepal. ACAP have set up a very interesting information post here with displays of Mustang artifacts and photos. Your first overnight on the trail

### **Day 5 : Trek to Chhuksang (2,980m) - 5 hrs trek**

The trail heads along the right bank of the Kali Gandaki River as you approach and then crosses a riverbed farm field which is more like an irrigating oasis. After three and a-half hours walking we haul up for a much needed lunch break in Chhuksang village. We will

see some pretty thatched houses which is built by mud and whitewashed outside. This is where we bunk out for an overnight in lodge on full board with all meals.

#### **Day 6 : Trek to Samar (3660) - 5 hrs trek**

There is a distinct change here, not only in the topography, but also in the culture, lifestyle and people, and the settlements become more scattered, smaller and more basic. The people of Lo or Mustang do practice agriculture, but because of the lack of rain and fertile soil, cultivation is in sheltered plots of land, scattering the brown landscape with patches of green. We carry on north, when you reach a huge red chunk of rock that has fallen from the cliffs above, forming a tunnel through which the river flows. A steel bridge spans the river just in front of the tunnel and north of here the Kali Gandaki becomes impassable on foot. The trek now leaves the valley and climbs steeply up a rocky alley to the village of Chele. Watch out here for the ferocious Tibetan mastiffs which are chained to many of the houses. From Chele you climb a steep spur and then continue ascending along the side of a spectacular steep canyon to a pass. Beyond the pass you descend on a pleasant trail to Samar, situated in a grove of poplar trees. This is a major stopping place for horse and mule caravans. Overnight in lodge on full board meals.

#### **Day 7 : Trek to Gheling (3,570m) - 5 hrs trek**

You climb above Samar to a ridge and then descend into a large gorge past a chorten before entering another valley filled with juniper trees. You then cross a stream and after climbing to a pass, you descend along a ridge to Shyangmochen a tiny settlement with a few tea shops. Nearby is Rangbyung, a cave containing stalagmites which have formed in the shape of chortens and one of the holiest places in Mustang. The trail climbs gently from Shyangmochen and you enter another huge valley before descending to Geling with its extensive fields of barley. As in all the settlements of Mustang, the white and ochre-painted houses are constructed using mud and stones, with roofs made of twigs, straw and a mixture of mud and pebbles. Overnight in lodge on full board meals.

#### **Day 8 : Trek to Ghami (3,520m) - 5 hrs trek**

We reckon this takes about 04 hours. From Geling the trail climbs gently through fields, up the center of the valley, passing above the settlement of Tama Gun and an imposing chorten. You then begin a taxing climb across the head of the valley to the Nyi La [3840m]. The descent from the pass is quite gentle and about half an hour further on we come to a trail junction; the right trail is the direct route to Charang, the left trail leads to Ghami. Ghami is a large white-washed village sheltered by overhanging cliffs. Overnight in lodge on full board meals.

#### **Day9 : Trek to Charang via Ghar Gompa (3,560m) - 5 hrs trek**

We head towards Drakmar through colorful cliffs and green landscapes. Immediately leaving Ghami the trail follows little descent & ascent which takes approximately 45 minutes. Then we reach the valley of Drakmar. There are lots of cliffy caves above the village with colorful hillocks. at Drakmar we get a chance to see blue sheep while climbing the Mui La pass at 4170m. Ghar Gompa is the oldest monastery of Nepal

which was built before Samey Monastery of Lhasa {Tibet}. This monastery is the Ngyinmapa sect where the hidden scriptures of Padmasambhava were said to be found. Then we follow the Tsarang Khola {stream} via Lo Ghekar as we reach Tsarang. Overnight in our lodge on full board meals.

#### **Day10 : Trek to Lo-manthang - 5 hrs trek**

You will spend part of the morning exploring the interesting village of Charang and its large monastery, before setting out for Lo Manthang. You climb gently above the valley to a large isolated chorten that marks the boundary between Charang and Lo. The trail then broadens and eventually you get your first view of the walled city of Lo Manthang. The city has only one entrance so you circumambulate the wall to the gate on the north east corner. Overnight in lodge on full board meals.

#### **Day11 : Excursion Day in Lomanthang - Today is a free day to explore this ancient capital**

Lo Manthang is untouched since the 14th century. The city contains about 150 houses, as well as residences for its many lamas. There are four major temples within the city and one of these, Champa Lhakang, contains a huge clay statue of Buddha as well as elaborated mandalas painted on the walls. The king's palace is an imposing building in the center of the city and is occupied by the current King and Queen. Although his duties are largely ceremonial, the King is respected by the people and consulted about many issues by villagers throughout the kingdom. Your first overnight in the lodge of Mustang on full board meals.

#### **Day12 : Trek to Chhosser caves and back to Lomanthang for night{optional by horse or jeep}**

We will visit the Chhosser riding by horse and carry self packed lunch. Chhosser is a mysterious, by its beauty of architecture. This cave looks like cliff but inside it there are step by step floor with 44 rooms. This cave is so amazing that it gives the feeling of being in Alien place and returned back to Lo-manthang for overnight at camp with full board of meals.

#### **Day13 : Trek to Yara (3,838m) - 5 hrs trek**

Finally, from the camp (Lo-Manthang) a short climb takes us up to a glacial valley with views of reddish brown historical wall city (the rainshadow zone) during the return back. From here we get an unforgettable image of the Lo. When come up to the hill, if you want to change the route you have to go by the opposite site. Along the mountain ridge after one hour the trail descends down to the village of 'DHI'. The time is taken in between while streaming down. On the way, you will see the meadows of farming fields nearby the river side. That is DHI village and this is where we have our lunch break down here. After our lunch break, we cross a river to follow a path along the left bank of a river side to Yara at (3,838m). From here in the dry season the trail follows the riverbed but in the monsoon it winds up the hills to a final steep climb to the top. It looks a natural sandy castle in front of you when you are atop on the Yara hills. In some places you will find a kind of salty dust like mineral on the hill. Overnight at lodge on full board meals.

#### **Day14 : Visit Luri Gompa & back to Yara - 7 hrs trek**

Today we head down to Luri Gompa which was founded in the 13th century, it is also called Kagyukpa cave monastery. There are golden written lama's books found here. The route continues up to Duyung Khola {river} which runs from the Damodar Kund (basin). This place is also famous for hindu pilgrims. the headwater is an area of land from where the water runs down into the KaliGandaki river. This place is famous for black ammonite fossils found hereabouts. Hindus and Buddhists collect these fossils to worship in their belief that it is the embodiment of God Vishnu. Overnight at lodge on full board meals.

#### **Day15 : Trek to Tangbe (3,240m) - 6 hrs trek**

Early in the morning we leave Yara along a high winding path. This soon leads down to the Dhechaeng Khola (river) which runs from the Damodar Kund (basin). The trail just crosses the small river of melting ice water and then we climb up for around one and a-half hour to DHI village along the winding desert mountain path to the Lo-Pa village of Tangya. The inhabitants of this gentle religious group of Buddhism are mostly busy in local businesses; the small foot hills roll away to distance horizons sheltering the villagers from the gentle winds coming in from the valley. From the village you turn your face to the north and we see some sandy cliffs over several hundred years old. Hereabouts we find the small village of Tangbe. We spend our Overnight in lodge on full board meals.

#### **Day16 : Trek to Tetang (3,067m) - 9 hrs trek**

Today we leave very early in the morning with our pack lunch because of the long distance compared to the other days. We climb some steps & then crossing over a suspension bridge following the trail to right side. We Soon come to the Yak khola (river) before climbing a terraced hill to PA at 4,210m, it is the highest point of the Upper Mustang trip. The trail climbs for about two and a half hours then you summit on the top (4,200m) it is a steep climb that covers your body with sweat. From here you are able to see in the distance the Damodar Himal and Saribung Himal at (6,346m). The main trail continues along the flat land to left after one and a-half hour walking; its now time to find a spot for lunch at PA. No houses but only the ruins remain here but drinking water sources are available here. So we will not waste much time as we just crossed only half the way. This leg of the journey takes another four to five hours total walking which is our target of the day. Now the trail descends and it is rough way so we must be careful! Injuries can happen due to carelessness. We can haul up here for some rest as the steps goes down and down. Meanwhile, you are able to see right down the mud roof valley that is your destination of the day. This is the village which we call Chhuksang or Tetang. Overnight in our lodge on full board meals.

#### **Day17: Tetang to Muktinath (3,800m) - 7/8 hrs trek**

Today, gradually we trek up till Gyu La {pass} 4,077m. It is one of those beautiful days and we take it easy on our walk. We will pass through Kharkas where we can see grazing domestic animals as well as wild mountain goats. Its peaceful up the valley as we reach to the top of Gyu La. From the pass you can see panoramic views of Thorong

peak, Nilgiri, Tukche peak & the lovely Muktinath valley. We reach Muktinath via Chhenkar village. Overnight in our lodge on full board meals.

### **Day18 : Trek to Jomsom (2,710m) - 5 hrs trek**

This is a pretty easy day, the trail gradually descend to Eklebhati at Kali Gandaki River valley, and we walk another two hours along the wide sandy and windy valley. The trail moves between two hills. Overnight at lodge on full board meals.

### **Day19 : Fly back to Pokhara**

This takes about 25 minutes and stay overnight at our hotel in Pokhara. The flights are available during the morning time. The strong breeze blows during the after and frequent change of the weather prevent the flight being landed and taken off in the afternoon. During the flights in morning, the sky looks very clear which makes you able to enjoy the splendid views of different mountain peaks. Overnight hotel.

### **Day20 : Drive to Kathmandu**

While driving from Pokhara to Kathmandu, you head up to Damauli, Dumre, Mugling and Kurintar where Nepal's first Cable car is operated to reach Manakamana 'Temple of wishes'. En route, you could enjoy the mountain views, green sceneries, rice terrace fields, vegetable fields and people happily engaged in their daily chores. From Naubishe you climb up to Thankot, the gateway to the capital city. You can also fly from Pokhara to Kathmandu which takes about 25 minutes. In the evening, we will visit a well known Nepali kitchen for dinner; & as you savor your meal, you will be entertained to an exciting cultural dance performed by the local belles. This is a complimentary outing on behalf of Glorious Adventure Treks for the good welfare of our guests. Overnight at your hotel in Kathmandu.

### **Day21 : Departure to that place we all love calling home**

After breakfast and our last day in Kathmandu, our vehicle and escorts will be on standby to drop you to the international airport three hours before our scheduled flight back home. At Glorious Adventure, meeting you has been a great honor and we pray for your Safe journey home and will reflect on the wonderful times we spent together. Bon Voyage!!! We hope to see you again some day...

## **Trip Includes:**

- All the domestic and international airport pick up and drop offs.
- An English speaking and experienced mountain trekking guide
- As itinerary required nights Hotel in Kathmandu & Pokhara with break fast
- Round trip airfare included airport tax. (Pokhara – Jomsom – Pokhara)
- Annapurna conservation area projects entry and TIMS card fees.
- Upper Mustang special permit.( which cost USD 50 per person per day

- Require supporting porters to carry your luggage.
- Lodges accommodation during the trek.
- Monasteries entry fee
- All the trekking crews (Guide, porter's) accidental and medical insurance.
- Company guarantee for the emergency rescue evacuation services (We advised to have your own travel insurance which covers the Evacuation cost).
- Fare-well dinner with cultural dance program at the end of tour

## **Trip Exclude:**

- International airfares and Nepal visa.
- Meals during the trek.
- Riding horse along the trail
- Extra nights hotel accommodation at Pokhara or Jomsom due to bad weather and earlier back to Kathmandu hotel
- Helicopter charter cost Pokhara to Jomjom-Pokhara, on flight cancellation due to bad weather.
- Tips to trekking staffs