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Upper Mustang Trek - 17 Days

Upper Mustang Trek is a journey to the mysterious Buddhist Kingdom of Nepal – Upper Mustang. Popular as Lo, It is unlike any other place in Nepal and was once forbidden and isolated from the rest of the world for decades. This is the ultimate destination that is able to evolve within its own distinctive culture and rich traditions closely tied to Tibet. This is a moderately difficult journey that takes you to the lesser-known areas that pass through one of the arid regions of Nepal with astonishing mountain scenery.

Upper Mustang owns a rich, long, and complex past which makes it one of the most attention-grabbing places in Nepal. The early history of Lois is blanketed in legend, myth, and mystery, but there are records of events in Lo as early as the 8th century. The Tibetan poet Milarepa, who lived from 1040 to 1123, seemed to visit this place.

Lo Manthang sits in the countryside and is alike the Tibetan plateau with its endless expanses of yellow and grey rolling hills eroded by wind. There is more rain in the lower part of the upper Mustang and the hills tend to be great red fluted cliffs of tiny round stones cemented together by mud. Villages are several hours apart and appear in the distance almost as mirages; during the summer season, after the crops are planted, they are a green oasis in the desert-like landscape. It feels like we are in a different world.

Our journey to Upper Mustang begins with your Kathmandu arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport. Next day, we will explore Kathmandu valley (World Heritage Sites), including Swyambhunath, Patan Durbar Square, Boudhanath, and Pashupatinath.

Upper Mustang 1.jpg

On the following day, we catch a private vehicle and drive to Pokhara, the city of lakes with magnificent views of the mountain and green hills. On the way there, we will catch a view of mountains, traditional villages, terraced fields, and raging Trishuli and Marsyandi rivers. Upon reaching there, we will enjoy the views of various lakes including Phewa Lake, Himalayan peaks such as the Annapurna ranges, and Machhapuchhre. The reflection of the mountains in the freshwaters of Phewa Lake looks breathtaking.

From that day forward, we will fly Jomsom (the district headquarter of Mustang District) from Pokhara. While in aircraft, you will fly amid the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri mountain ranges. You will be amid the high mountain peaks nearby the huge apple orchids now. Getting ready with some refreshment meals or tea/coffee, we set our journey towards Kagbeni, the gateway of Upper Mustang via trekking. It is a short trek on the bank of the mighty Kali Gandaki River.

Spending a night there, we continue our journey towards Chele. As the wind flow is strong in the afternoon, we commence our journey early morning hours. We recommend you wear a face mask and sunglasses to protect yourself from dust in the air. On the way, we will cross a couple of villages including Tangbe.

From here, we head towards Syangboche where the trekking trail passes via a settlement called Eklo Bhatti (lonely

house) and a high pass Taklam High Pass, which sits at 3,625m / 11,940ft. With the astonishing views of Mount Nilgiri, we pass another village of Samar to reach our day destination – Syangboche.

On our 5th day trek, we will reach the beautiful village of Ghami. We will pass Yamda La Pass (3,845m / 12,655ft), and the beautiful villages of Geling, and Tamagaun before reaching our destination. It will be walking like deserted lands.

In the subsequent day's trek, we will reach the village of Tsarang, another cultural town having around 1000 citizens. We are now walking in the driest part of the Mustang. However, the views of remoteness, religious shrines, and mountains are mind-blowing.

From Tsarang, we set our journey to Lo Manthang. While doing so, we will get the magnificent sceneries of Mount Nilgiri, Tilicho, Annapurna I, Bhirkuti Peak, and several other mountains. The journey will be uphill till we reach Lo La Pass. Then we will descend to Lo Manthang. We will spend one more day here exploring the walled city along with gompas, palaces, old temples, and many more.

Our return journey begins with the tenth day's trek. Leaving the historical, religious, and cultural city of Lo Manthang, we head to Ghami. In the next two days' trek, we will reach Muktinath, one of the most popular religious destinations in Nepal. To reach Muktinath, we will pass through several small chortens. Caves, monasteries, a couple of small settlements, and some high mountain passes. Muktinath is a common holy site for Hindus and Buddhists and hosts 108 bathing spouts. Additionally, you can see an eternal flame burning in the temple.

Upper Mustang 2.jpg

Image not found or type unknown

On our final day trek, we will trek to Jomsom. The trekking route descends to Jharkot and Khingar, Ekle Bhatti, and finally to Jomsom. From Ekle Bhatti, we will follow the route of ascent (on our first day trip- Jomsom to Kagbeni). Spending overnight there, we fly back to Pokhara catching an early flight.

Spending a day in Pokhara, exploring the touristic cores there, we drive back to Kathmandu for your international flight

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PRICE INCLUDES

Transportation

- Private vehicle for transfers as per in itinerary; airport pickup & drop, sightseeing, Kathmandu - Pokhara - Kathmandu
- Domestic flight tickets (Pokhara - Jomsom - Pokhara) and airport departure taxes

Food and Accommodation

- Two nights' lodging in Kathmandu in a 3-star category hotel
- Two nights' lodging in Pokhara in a 3-star category hotel
- Twelve nights' lodging in the best available local lodge/teahouse throughout the trek
- All standard meals (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner) during the trek
- Available seasonal fruits throughout the trek
- Breakfast at a hotel in Kathmandu and Pokhara
- Farewell Dinner in Kathmandu

Staff

- A Government licensed English-speaking trekking guide including wages, meals, insurance, lodging, transportation, flight, and other necessary gear & equipment.
- For more than six trekkers, one assistant guide includes wages, meals, insurance, lodging, transportation, flight, and other necessary gear & equipment.
- A porter for two trekkers/ climbers including wages, meals, insurance, lodging, transportation, flight, and other necessary gear & equipment
- A Government licensed English-speaking tour guide for the Sightseeing Program at Kathmandu

Permits and Tariffs

- Upper Mustang Trekking Special Permit
- Annapurna Conservation Area Permit (ACAP)

Additional

- A Gortex (100% Waterproof) Duffle bag to keep your personal belongings to be carried by the porter
- Assistance in arranging rescue operations in case of complicated health conditions (funded by travel insurance)
- Upper Mustang trekking map, Outward Adventure t-shirt
- Outward Adventure Appreciation Certificate after the successful trek
- A first aid medicine bag in each group (carried by trekking leader)

PRICE EXCLUDES

- International Flight Cost

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- Nepal Entry Visa Fees
- Extra baggage check-in during the flight (Pokhara - Jomsom- Pokhara) if more than 15 KG, 01 USD per KG extra, can pay directly to the airline.
- Extra night accommodation in Kathmandu due to early arrival or late departure, or early return from the climb
- Personal expenses such as alcoholic drinks, shopping, snacks, boiled bottle water, hot (Tea/ Coffee) and cold drinks, hot shower, alcohol, Wi-Fi, telephone call, battery re-charge fee, extra porters, etc
- Additional costs suffered due to causes beyond our control, such as natural disasters, weather conditions, itinerary modifications due to safety concerns, emergency evacuation, changes in government policies, strikes, and so forth
- Tips for guides, porters, and drivers (Tips are expected and appreciated)

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ITINERARY IN DETAIL

Day 1: Kathmandu Arrival (1338m / 4390ft)

Namaste!

Welcome to Nepal.

Upon your arrival at the terminal gate of Tribhuvan International Airport, our office representative will be there with your nameplate. You will be welcomed there with the garland and greetings.

Then you will be transferred to the hotel in a private vehicle through the windy streets of Kathmandu. As there are no other scheduled programs today, you will get rest in your hotel and get rid of long jet lag. In the evening, you can stroll around the Thamel testing authentic Nepalese cuisines.

Day 2: Drive Kathmandu (1338m / 4390ft) to Pokhara (820m / 2,690ft), 205km / 127miles, 6 to 7 hrs

After breakfast, we move to Pokhara. It is about 6 hours' drive by private vehicle. While traveling there, we can see the picturesque Trishuli and Marsyangdi rivers, several terraced farms with lots of cultivation, and occasional views of the mountains, streams, and beautiful hills and greeneries.

Pokhara, a heavenly site and a popular tourist destination with a plethora of showcases such as lakes, temples, monasteries, and stupa, is surrounded by the green hills with panoramic views of Annapurna and Machapuchare in the north, Dhaulagiri in the west, Manasulu and Lamjung Himal in the east.

Day 3: Fly from Pokhara to Jomsom (2,720m / 8,915ft) and trek to Kagbeni (2,800m / 9,500ft) 25 minutes flight and 4 hours trek (Trek Distance 11.4km / 7miles)

Getting up early, we get breakfast and get ready for the airport for the morning flight to Jomsom. It is a short flight that passes between Dhaulagiri and Annapurna mountain ranges above the world’s deepest gorges and beautiful Kali Gandaki River Valley.
Upon landing at Jomsom, we set up our journey for Kagbeni. Following the right bank of Kali Gandaki River, we walk viewing the beautiful mountain ranges. It is an easy yet interesting hike to Kagbeni. We are at the entrance of Upper Mustang and we have to show our special permits here to enter this place.

Day 4: Trek from Kagbeni (2,800m / 9,500ft) to Chele (3,055m / 10,025ft), 11.2km / 6.9miles - 5 to 6 hrs

After breakfast, we begin our journey for Chele through the rugged terrains, taking us up to the river valley along the bank of the Kali Gandaki. The trekking route widens as we move up along the trails. Mules, sheep, horses and vehicles are seen on the trail.

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After trekking some hours, we reach Kang monastery and several caves around. Upon reaching in the village of Tangbe, we get our lunch. Here we can see several chortens and stone-paved white-painted houses. Throughout the village, we can see incredible fields with buckwheat, barley and apple orchards.

Along with them, we can observe the majestic scneries of snow-capped mountains, including Nilgiri. The mountains play hide and sick throughout our journey. After having lunch, we will continue our trek to the Kali Gandaki River and cross with the help of suspension bridges. The trail then leads you through a steep and rocky climb before arriving at Chele.

Day 5: Trek from Chele (3,055m / 10,025ft) to Syangboche (3,930m / 11,400ft) 11.5km / 7.1miles, 5 to 6 hrs

It is considerably a challenging day as we are gaining altitude around 800m. Leaving Chele, we climb a steep spur and then continue up a sttp canyon to Eklo Bhatti and further ascend to Taklam La (3,625 m/11,940 ft), a high mountain pass. Continuing the journey we reach the village of Samar.

From here, we get an incredible views of Mount Nilgiri. It is also an usual place to stop horses and mule caravans for rest. After having rest and lunch here, we descend to a large gorge past Rangchyung Chorten - painted red, black, yellow, and white, and trek ahead to reach Syangboche.

Day 6: Trek from Syangboche (3,930m / 11,400ft) to Ghami (3,520m / 11,535ft) 9.3km / 5.7miles 5 to 6 hrs

The trekking route passes through even beautiful terrains of the region today. After breakfast, we start our uphill climb observing the magnificent views of the mountains and the Kai Gandaki gorge. Then, we will pass through various routes before descending. We then pass through multiple settlements of the region, including Tamagaon and Chhunggar.

The trekking route passes through traditional settlements before arriving at Jhaite. We then pass through trails of the region that provide you with great views of snow-capped mountains. We then trek downward on the relaxing trail that will take you to Ghami and spend overnight there.

Day 7: Trek from Ghami (3,520m / 11,535ft) to Tsarang (3505m / 11,500ft) 11.2km / 6.9miles 5 to 6 hrs

The day walk starts off over rough and sometimes slippery ground as we descend to a suspension bridge over the Ghami Khola. On the way, we pass several mane walls (stone-built walls with Tibetan mantras carved into the stones) and over the Charang La Pass (3,870 m). village also has a fortress and Red Gompa to the east of it. We can explore several places around after the lunch.

Day 8: Trek from Tsarang (3505m / 11,500ft) to Lo Manthang (3810m / 12,135ft) 11.5km / 7.1miles 4 to 5 hrs

The journey today takes ust to our ultimate destination of Lo Manthang (3810m / 12,135ft), the forbidden kingdom for several hundred years.

The trail leads you to our ultimate destination of Lo Manthang. You will continue your trek passing through these

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incredible landscapes of the region. It covers a total distance of 11 kilometers which nearly takes 4 to 5 hours to complete. The wide trail passes gradually through uphill treks.

These remote trails pass through pleasant viewpoints that provide you with majestic views of the region. Dhaulagiri, Annapurna, and other Himalayan mountains are some of the significant mountain peaks of this region. You will reach Lo Manthang passing through beautiful red and white Sungda Chorten.

Moreover, Lo Manthang is the former capital of Kingdom Lo. It is a walled town with many settlements of the ethnic Lo community. Lo was a kingdom until 2008, when the federal republic government was formally introduced in Nepal. You will stay the night at a local stay in Lo Manthang.

Day 9: Rest and exploration day in Lo Manthang

Today is scheduled as exploration day of the historical Lo Manthang – a walled city with around hundred and fifty houses. This antique city dates back to approximately 1390 s. But by Ame Pal, Lo Manthang was the walled capital of the Kingdom of Lo since its founding in 1380. The village is best known for its tall whitewashed mud-brick walls, gompas, and royal palace.

The royal palace is a nine-cornered, five-story structure built around 1400. It is the oldest existing structure with such architecture. This town is also home to four major temples - Jampa Gompa (Jampa Lhakhang), Thubchen Gompa, Chodey Gompa, and Choprang Gompa. Jampa Gompa is the oldest and is also known as God's house. Similarly, Choprang Gompa is also known as New Gompa.

Day 10: Trek from Lo Manthang (3,810m / 12,135ft) to Ghami (3,520m / 5,577ft) 16.1km / 10miles 6 to 7 hrs

We begin our return journey now. From Lo Manthang, we head south towards Ghami. We will not take the same route we took to arrive at Lo Manthang. As our journey passes through Drakmar, we will also make sure we head to the famous Ghar Monastery decorated with beautiful wall paint. Our trek continues until we reach Ghami.

Day 11: Trek from Ghami (3,520m / 5,577ft) to Samar (3,700m / 12,139ft) 13.2km / 8.2miles 6 to 7 hrs

After leaving Ghami, we begin our narrow winding path until you reach Geling crossing a small stream. Samar is a small village with terraces, Tibetan-style houses, Mani walls, a monastery, and prayer flags and here you find people following Tibetan lifestyles and traditions. Continuing the journey, we reach Samar for an overnight stay.

Day 12: Trek from Samar (3,700m / 12,139ft) to Chhusang (2,980m / 9,776ft) 9.9km / 6.1miles 5 to 6 hrs

It is our 12th-day trip and we continue our journey to Chhusang today. Leaving Samar we continue trekking back to Chhusang. It is about five to six hours journey through the windy trekking trails passing several ups and downs.

Day 13: Trek from Chhusang (2,980m / 9,776ft) to Muktinath (3,760m / 12,335ft) 14.5km / 9miles 6 to 7 hrs

A big day is ahead. Today, we will be crossing Gyu La Pass (4077m) one of the most popular mountain passes in the

region. Ultimately reach Muktinath as the trek joins with the famous route of Annapurna Circuit Trek. From this pass, you can see several majestic Himalayan peaks extending northwards into Tibet before you, and as you look behind, you can see the Annapurna range.

The trail passes through several ancient villages before reaching Muktinath - a common Hindu and Buddhist holy site. Buddhists call Muktinath ‘Chumig Gyatsa’, which in Tibetan means "A Hundred Waters". The walled Muktinath temple complex houses a Buddhist monastery, several Hindu shrines, 108 bathing spouts, and an eternal flame.

Day 14: Trek from Muktinath (3,760m /12,335ft) to Jomsom (2,720m/8,915ft) 22km / 13.6miles, 5 to 6 hrs

Yes!

It is the last day of the entire trek and we follow the downhill trail. We descend to Jharkot and Khingar- where there are beautiful monasteries that you can explore. We gradually lose elevation as we join Jomsom, which sits on the bottom of Kali Gandaki River Valley. Jomsom market area is a huge change from the serene trails and remote villages we visited. We spend overnight here awaiting the flight to Pokhara tomorrow.

Day 15: Fly Jomsom (2,720m/8,915ft) to to Pokhara (820m / 2,690ft)

Early in the morning, we board in the plane and fly back to Pokhara which is just a 20 minutes flight. Throughout the day, we can explore the entire Pokhara valley. We can go boating in exotic Fewa, Rupa and Begnas Lake, visit the beautiful hilltop monastery, or explore the mystical caves. We can do some shopping, buy souvenirs and many more. . The city also offers a wide range of adventure activities like Paragliding, Zip Flying, Bungee Jumping and many more. In the evening we can relax and enjoy the vibrant city of Pokhara.

Day 16: Drive Pokhara (820m / 2,690ft) to Kathmandu (1338m / 4390ft)

Catching the tourist bus, or a private car, we drive back to Kathmandu today. It is a 5-6 hour journey through the Prithivi Highway passing several villages, terraced farms, and hills with the occasional views of the mountains and around. In the evening, we will gather in one of the cultural restaurants of Thamel for the farewell dinner.

Day 17: Final Departure (Airport Drop)

This is the last day of the entire Upper Mustang Trek. You will leave this nation with the plentiful memories of the semi-arid lands of the forbidden historical lands of Upper Mustang. One of the representatives of Outward Adventure will leave you at the airport at least three hours before your scheduled flight.

Good Bye

See you again!