

himalaya trekking

MERA PEAK



Mera Peak combines summiting the highest trekking peak in Nepal with a beautiful walk in up the relatively quiet Arun Valley. The views from the summit are genuinely breath-taking: Everest, Lhotse and Ama Dablam can all be seen clearly and watching the sun rise across the heads of these mountains is never to be forgotten



why choose Kandoo...

Everyone at Kandoo is passionate about adventure travel and we specialize in creating adventures to some of the world's most iconic destinations.

Our aim is to help you create an adventure that will become a lifelong memory: an adventure that takes you one step beyond your everyday, one step beyond your normal limits and one step beyond your dreams.

We understand that what makes an adventure really special is different for every one of us. But whatever it takes, whether you are eight or eighty, we will work really hard to help you create your own life changing, memory making adventure. The end result of all the effort our team put in to get your trip just right is that we consistently get great reviews from our clients.

More than anything we love to talk to travellers so please do ask us anything about your planned trip.

We look forward to talking to you!

trip highlights

Summit the highest trekking peak in Nepal

Approach through the unspoilt Arun Valley

Lodge and tent-based accommodation

Open and private treks available

Duration: 18 days **Code:** MP

Summary: 18 day trip, 16 day trek, 2 hotel nights, 10 nights teahouse, 5 nights camping

Included: Breakfast at Kathmandu hotel

Return flight Kathmandu-Lukla

Teahouse accommodation

Full service camping and portering

Open group size: Normally 2-6, plus leader and staff

Min age: 16 years old for open groups, 12 years old for private trek

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Mera Peak is the highest trekking peak in Nepal and at 6476m is a huge Himalayan mountain. The views of Everest and the whole region are second to none.

Despite being the highest trekking peak, the Mera Peak trek is well within reach of anyone with a good level of fitness, even if they have no previous technical experience.

You start your Mera Peak adventure with the exhilarating Kathmandu to Lukla flight, with great views all the way and the hair-raising landing at Lukla's short runway. Having assembled your crew the route takes you south around the mountain to Paiya and Pangom avoiding the Zatrwa La crossing which at 4250m nearly always causes problems with altitude sickness if crossed too early. This part of the route is quiet but heavily farmed. From Sibuje you branch north heading into pristine bamboo and rhododendron jungle before reaching your first tented camp. The trek then moves on up the Arun valley with plenty of time to acclimatise before reaching Khare.

The first day of the push to the summit of Mera Peak takes you to the camp at Mera La and from there you move higher to the spectacular High Camp, clinging onto a rocky outcrop on the edge of the glacier. Sunset at High Camp is amazing with the Himalaya's 8000m giants glowing orange as the light fades. Summit day is a long hard slog up the glacier, before a short sharp scramble up an ice-wall to the summit of Mera Peak. Take as much time as the cold will allow to enjoy the view, probably the best view of the Everest range in Nepal.

After summiting you descend back to Khare before tracking back down the Arun valley and finally heading over the Zatrwa La pass now fully acclimatised and dropping back into Lukla.

at a glance

DAY 1	Hotel night in Kathmandu
DAY 2	Fly to Lukla, trek to Paiya
DAY 3	Paiya to Panggom La
DAY 4	Panggom La to Ningbo
DAY 5	Ningbo to Bamboo Camp
DAY 6	Bamboo Camp to Khote
DAY 7	Khote to Tagnak
DAY 8	Acclimatisation day in Tagnak
DAY 9	Tagnak to Khare
DAY 10	Khare to Mera La
DAY 11	Contingency day / Skills refresher
DAY 12	Mera La to High Camp
DAY 13	Ascend Mera Peak, trek to Khare
DAY 14	Khare to Khote
DAY 15	Khote to Chetera La
DAY 16	Chetera La to Lukla via Zatrwa La Pass
DAY 17	Fly to Kathmandu
DAY 18	Depart



trek type

We offer the classic Mera Peak trek as an open group or private trek. We run 1 open peak climb every month during the trekking seasons (March-May and September-November). Private treks can be arranged on any day that suits you.

what's included

Your hotel stay for the nights before and after the trek

All airport transfers

Return flight between Kathmandu and Lukla

National Park entry, TIMS fees & climbing permit

A fully supported trek with a qualified mountain guide

All drinking water on the trek

Teahouse accommodation on a room only basis

High quality sleeping tents

All meals when camping on the climb

Access to emergency oxygen and first aid kit

what's not included

International airfares and visas

Tips for your guides and porters

Personal items

Travel insurance (you must be insured, and specifically for treks up to 6500m, using fixed ropes)

Your personal trekking and climbing gear

Your personal medicines or prescriptions

Meals and drinks on the trek (except when camping)

Meals and drinks in Kathmandu (breakfast is included)

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arrival at Kathmandu airport

Once you have cleared immigration and collected your luggage, make your way to the main doors. Baggage reclaim at Kathmandu is a little chaotic but somehow it works! Once you've collected your bags you need to make sure you have your airline baggage tags handy as they check these off against the flight tags on your luggage before you can leave. If you have booked an airport transfer with us, your driver will be outside these doors, holding a 'Kandoo' sign. If you have chosen to make your own way to the pre-trek hotel, you can easily find a taxi at the airport. The address of your hotel is on your trip itinerary.

currency

The Nepali Rupee is a closed currency so you will not be able to buy this before you arrive. It is advisable to travel with US Dollars, as these are widely accepted. It is very important that US bills be new (post 2006), crisp and untornd. If you want some local currency then we can take you to an ATM or bank. Alternatively all the hotels in Kathmandu will change money for you. We recommend that you take local currency on the actual trek with you, as the teahouses prefer local currency to dollars. You will also get a more favourable exchange rate in Kathmandu.

If you are relying on a credit or debit card for emergency funds, make sure you tell your card issuer that you will be using it abroad, or you may find that it won't work when you really need it.

detailed itinerary

DAY 1: ARRIVE IN KATHMANDU

All trekkers need to organise their own flights to Kathmandu International Airport (KTM). From Kathmandu Airport we will arrange a private transfer to your hotel. That night or early the next morning you will meet your local Kandoo representative and have a full pre-trek briefing

DAY 2: FLIGHT TO LUKLA – TREK TO PAIYA

Elevation: 1300m to 2800m to 3450m, Distance: 12km, Time: 7-8 hours

The flight from Kathmandu to Lukla takes 45 minutes and is an adventure in itself with great views of the Everest region (from the left of the plane) and ending with a hair-raising landing on a steep mountain runway. From Lukla we descend first to Surke where we cross the river before climbing steeply to Chutok La. From there it is about another hour of undulating flat to Paiya.

DAY 3: TREK TO PANGGOM LA

Elevation: 3450m to 3478m, Distance: 13km, Time: 8-9 hours

The day starts with a sharp descent through mainly cultivated hillsides until we reach the wooden bridge where we cross the Paiya Khola river. Another tough climb brings us back up to Kari La from where we traverse on typical Nepali flat for most of the afternoon before we reach the Sherpa village of Panggom La.

DAY 4: TREK TO NINGBO

Elevation: 3478m to 3525m, Distance: 10km, Time: 6-7 hours

A short climb brings us to the Panggom La pass where we cross over into the Inkhu Valley, passing through the village of Bhusme, where we will see local villagers and farmers going about their day to day life. We carry on further along the trail to Ningbo where we will camp overnight in a forest clearing.

DAY 5: TREK TO BAMBOO CAMP

Elevation: 3525m to 3548m, Distance: 10km, Time: 6-7 hours

Today starts relatively easily, moving around the mountain again until we reach Sibuje where we will stop for lunch. From there we take a turn north off the main track on a route that takes us into the rhododendron jungle and well away from the main trading paths. Overnight is at a small campsite known as Bamboo Camp.

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lost / delayed luggage

Our procedure for lost or delayed luggage is as follows:

Establish what items are missing and a contingency plan for each critical item

If it reaches 6pm on the evening before starting the trek and your luggage has not arrived we recommend buying and/or hiring items immediately as a precaution

We will arrange for the hire of wet weather gear, t-shirts, fleeces and sleeping bags for you, to be paid locally

We will take you to a shop where you can buy toiletry items, e.g. toothbrush

We will do everything we can to help if your luggage is lost or delayed but all additional out of pocket costs have to be paid locally and should be charged back to the airline or your insurers. This includes the cost of taxis for shopping and/or repeat trips to the airport to collect bags.

detailed itinerary

DAY 6: TREK TO KHOTE

Elevation: 3548m to 3480m, Distance: 11km, Time: 7-8 hours

From Bamboo Camp we continue trekking through the jungle, going up or down quite steeply, passing through the village of Tashing Ongma before finally dropping down to meet the Inku Khola at Mosom Kharka. From here we continue to trek along the river before reaching the larger village of Khote and our next lodge. Already we are starting to get impressive views of Mera Peak at the head of the valley.

DAY 7: TREK TO TAGNAK

Elevation: 3480m to 4252m, Distance: 11km, Time: 7-8 hours

The forest gives way to open valley again by mid-morning, revealing the peaks which line either side. The valley swings eastward into a new array of peaks and as we approach Tagnak, the route up toward the Mera glacier comes into view. Damage caused to the valley by the collapse of the glacial lake Sabai Tsho is all too apparent as we head up the river. We reach Tagnak mid-afternoon.

DAY 8: ACCLIMATISATION IN TAGNAK

Elevation: 4252m to 5000m to 4252m

This is an important day for acclimatisation and we will gain as much height as we can, climbing the slopes behind Tagnak up to the Tibetan Prayer stones before returning to Tagnak for lunch. In the afternoon we can head up the slopes to the north to look at what is left of the glacial lake, Sabai Tsho. You can still see a distinct line, far above, marking where the water had once reached.

DAY 9: TREK TO KHARE

Elevation: 4252m to 4940m, Distance: 6km, Time: 6-7 hours

This morning's walk up alongside the Dig Tsho glacier is easy and relaxed. This is an excellent valley opening out views to the north of the Hinku Nup glacier and the line of peaks beyond. Only the last section up to our base camp at Khare is steep. If time and energy allows you should take an acclimatisation walk up the grassy ridge immediately behind the village. This gives great views of the flattened ridge across the glacier which we will ascend and south to Mera itself.

DAY 10: TREK TO MERA LA

Elevation: 4940m to 5554m, Distance: 5km, Time: 6-7 hours

We return to the glacier today, and this time follow it round in a wide arc, keeping close under the northern flank where there are no crevasses. The Mera La is a rounded snow col that bridges south to the main sweep of the Mera glacier coming down from Mera Peak. Our camp for the night is just over the Mera La pass.

DAY 11: CONTINGENCY DAY

A contingency day allocated for poor weather, etc.

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detailed itinerary

DAY 12: TREK TO HIGH CAMP

Elevation: 5554m to 5800m, Distance: 5km, time: 6-7 hours

Crampons on again for the start of the push to the summit. We climb back up to the pass at Mera La then head up the glacier towards a rocky outcrop where we will set the most spectacular high camp. Clinging onto the edge of the mountain the views from here are incredible. Kangchenjunga is visible to the east above the ridge of Chamlang; the ice spine of Barents is left of Makalu. Between it and the beautiful twin peaks of Ama Dablam, we will see Nuptse, Lhotse's south face and Lhotse Shar. Over the ridge stands the summit of Everest, the final stages of the traditional route up the south-east ridge and over the south summit to the summit ridge.

DAY 13: ASCENT OF MERA PEAK

Elevation: 5800m to 6476m to 4940m, Distance: 8km, Time: 10-12 hours

You will be woken at about 2am with hot tea and a high energy meal to start our summit ascent of Mera Peak. We start up the main glacier, crossing to the south side as we approach the snow hump-back ridge. This part of the route is not technical but 30 degree slopes are still tough. The slope steepens for a section behind the ridge and then we swing diagonally westward. The summit comes back into view and we are on the level summit ridge. At the foot of the final steep ascent you will attach to a fixed rope laid by your guide and use your ice axe and a jumar to climb the final 30 metre, 55 degree pitch to reach Mera Peak's summit. A spectacular panorama greets us with clear views over to Everest. Once you've had chance to take this all in and congratulate yourself on an amazing achievement, we will head back down to Khare for a celebration.

DAY 14: TREK TO KHOTE

Elevation: 4940m to 3480m, Distance: 15km, Time: 8-9 hours

A long walk back down the Arun valley finally brings us to Khote again.

DAY 15: TREK TO CHETERA LA

Elevation: 3480m to 4150m, Distance: 13km, Time: 7-8 hours

A new route has now been completed which stays high on the open hillsides west of the Hinku river, rather than winding through the forests down below. This makes for a quicker return with some fantastic views back to Mera.

DAY 16: TREK TO LUKLA VIA ZATRWA LA PASS

Elevation: 4150m to 4580 m to 2800m, Distance: 13km, Time: 7-8 hours

The trail goes over a series of rises and high plateaux before we finally reach the craggy Zatrwa La Pass at 4580m, where we look back on the Hinku wilderness for the last time and the south face of the peak we have just climbed. A gradual descent traverses toward the rocky outcrop of the Zatr Og. We descend now steeply from the Kalo Himal, the 'black mountains', into the rocky slopes and cascading streams of the Sherpa populated Dudh Koshi valley. The high crags give way to forest, then to farmland as we approach the tourist bustle of Lukla.

DAY 17: FLY TO KATHMANDU

After an early breakfast, we will head to the airstrip for our return journey to Kathmandu. Later, you have free time to explore. You stay overnight in a hotel in Kathmandu.

DAY 18: DEPARTURE FROM KATHMANDU

We will collect you from your hotel and transfer you to Kathmandu Airport for your departing flight.

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gear rental

We recommend that wherever possible you use your own gear for your trek as this is the best way to ensure your comfort and enjoyment. We recognise though that the cost of some items is very high and this may not be possible. We do not have our own gear available for rental but there are many places offering gear for rental in Kathmandu. The quality of rental gear is very variable and it is your responsibility to check carefully the condition of any item you rent. We accept no responsibility for the quality of equipment hired. An indication of the likely rental costs is below.

Four Season Sleeping Bag - \$2 per day

Down Jacket - \$2 per day

Trekking Poles - \$1 per day

*Sleeping Mat - \$2 per day
(closed cell foam mat; inflatable mats cannot be hired)*

For Island Peak you will also need additional specialist equipment. This can be hired in Kathmandu but is also available to rent at a lodge close to base camp. Prices below are for Kathmandu rental. Prices in the lodges can be more than twice this cost. It is still cheaper though to rent from these lodges as you only need to pay for 3-4 days hire. You should be aware though that the range of sizes and the quality of rental gear available here is even more limited than in Kathmandu and you may not find something that is perfect for you. In addition, climbing boots may have only just been returned by a previous user and may still be wet.

High Altitude Climbing Boot - \$3 per day

Crampons - \$2 per day

Ice Axe - \$2 per day

*Climbing Accessories Pack - \$12 per day
(includes helmet, harness, carabiners, prussik loop, tape sling, ascender & descender)*

equipment and clothing

During the booking process we will direct you to the detailed Equipment List on our website. Please double check that you have everything that you need before beginning your trek. If you think you have forgotten a vital piece of equipment, please let our team in Kathmandu know as soon possible so they can help you source a replacement.

HEADGEAR

Warm beanie style hat – knitted or fleece

Neck gaiter or scarf. It can get dusty in Nepal and the air very cold. A scarf or balaclava comes in useful for keeping dust out and can double as a warm layer for your neck / face!

Sun hat – preferably wide-brimmed for protection

Sunglasses – high UV protection

Headlamp (plus extra batteries)

Climbing helmet

UPPER BODY

Thermal or fleece base layer (x2)

Long sleeve shirt/tshirt – light or medium weight, moisture wicking (x3)

Short sleeved shirt/tshirt – lightweight, moisture wicking (x2)

Fleece or soft shell jacket (x2)

Insulated jacket – down or primaloft

Lightweight water/windproof hard shell outer jacket

Gloves – lightweight, fleece or quick drying fabric

Gloves – heavyweight, insulated, preferably water resistant

Over mittens – with safety straps

LEGS

Leggings – thermal or fleece base layer (x1)

Trekking trousers – light or medium weight (x2) – convertible trousers work well

Waterproof hard shell trousers – ski pants work fine (x1)

Gaiters

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pre-trek briefing

Your guide team will meet you at your hotel the evening before your trek begins, where we'll review the plans for the trek with you, make sure you have all the right gear and answer any questions you may have. In order to set a base line for your daily health check, your resting pulse rate will be tested and if it is above 100 you will be required to see a doctor before starting your trek.

trekking bag weight

The internal flights operate a strict limit of 10kg for your main equipment bag and a maximum of 5kg for your day sack. This weight limit is particularly tight for the peak climbs. We therefore allow a limit of 15kg for your main equipment bag and 5kg for your day sack, and we will arrange for the extra 5kg to travel as excess baggage. There may be times when the airline is unable to carry the excess baggage on the same flight. If this should happen, your climbing kit will be re-packed separately, sent on the next available flight and a porter will bring it to catch up with you on the trail. Please note you will be given 2 litres of water on arrival in Lukla to fill your water bottles for your first day's trekking, so you do not need to carry water on the flight from Kathmandu.

If you are renting equipment in Khare, please allow for the additional weight when you leave Kathmandu, so that your bag does not exceed 15kg for the porters to carry once the climbing kit is added later.

All items must be packed in your main equipment bag. They should not be attached to the outside, as we are not responsible if items fall off when the bags are being carried on the trek.

FEET

Climbing boot – insulated, stiff-soled (B3)

Trekking boots – mid weight with good ankle support

Training shoe or similar – to wear around the teahouses

Mid-weight trekking socks (x5 pairs)

Breathable, high-wicking liner socks (x3 pairs)

Thermal trekking socks for upper reaches of your trek (x2 pair)

TREKKING GEAR

Small Rucksack or Daypack (30-40 litres) to carry water and personal items

Waterproof duffle bag (approx 80-100 litres)

Sleeping bag (4 season or -10 Deg C) and compression sack

Trekking poles

Water bottle or hydration bag – must be able to carry 1.5-2L of water

CLIMBING GEAR

Crampons – to fit your climbing boots

Ice axe

Climbing harness

Ascending (jumar) and descending (belay) devices

Carabiners – 2 x locking, 2 x non-locking

Prussik loop and tape sling

OTHER ACCESSORIES

Sunscreen and lip balm - high SPF

Toiletries, including toilet paper, wet wipes and hand sanitiser

Camera and spare batteries

Plug adapter, for charging devices in teahouses and hotels

Personal medication and first aid kit

Personal snacks and energy bars – dried fruit and nuts are a good option

Isotonic drink powder / energy drink powder to mix in with your water

Microfibre towel for wiping hands and face each day

Pee bottle, useful for late night toilet needs

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airport security checks

New enhanced security checks were implemented in July 2014 at a number of international airports, including the UK and USA. In addition to existing security measures, passengers may be required to show that electronic devices in their hand luggage are charged up, and you may therefore be asked to turn on devices such as mobile phones, tablets, laptops and e-books in front of the security team. If the device does not have power, then it may be retained by airport security, or you would need to book onto a later flight once the device has been fully charged. You should ensure that all electronic devices in your hand luggage are fully charged prior to travel. If you are transferring between flights, make sure that you do not deplete the power on your devices on the first part of the journey, as it may not be possible to recharge the device at the transfer airport before boarding your next flight.

In March 2017, certain electronic devices were banned from being carried in the cabin from several countries in the Middle East and Africa on flights into the USA and UK. If your return flight from Nepal is routing through this region, check with your airline if your flight will be affected. If your luggage is being checked right through to your final destination, any items that are not allowed in the cabin will need to be in your hold luggage when you check in at Kathmandu airport.

deep-vein thrombosis

When travelling on long-haul flights (especially over 8 hours) there are a number of recommendations that are believed to reduce the risk of DVT. These include keeping well hydrated and avoiding alcohol, stretching and moving around the aircraft, and wearing compression stockings.

travel information

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses. For Mera Peak, this means that you must be covered for trekking to 6500m, using fixed ropes.

Please take a copy of your insurance policy to the pre-trek briefing, as the guide will need to collect your insurance details. We also ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day sack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Please double check that your passport is valid for 6 months beyond the date of arrival in Nepal. We recommend that you take a photocopy of your passport and keep it separate from the original, and this will be useful if the original is lost while you are travelling. You must carry your passport on the trek with you, as it is required for internal flights.

Most visitors to Nepal (including nationals from the UK, Europe, USA and Australia) require a tourist visa to enter Nepal. To secure a visa you will need to present proof that you have a return ticket, and proof that you have sufficient money to support yourself during your stay in Nepal. Visa can be obtained at your local Nepalese Embassy or on arrival at Kathmandu Tribhubhan International Airport. We highly recommend securing a visa before departure as this will ensure you have no problems passing immigration, as well as speed up the process of clearing immigration. You will need at least one blank visa page in your passport. Certain nationalities not mentioned above must apply for a visa in advance, so check with your local Nepalese Embassy. Visas are valid for 6 months from the date of issue, so do not send off your application too early.

Most of our tours require a 30 day tourist visa which usually costs in the neighbourhood of \$40 (around £35). Visas can be extended once you are in Nepal, but overstaying your visa is taken very seriously, and can result in your being detained or not allowed to leave the country without paying a fine.

TRAVELLING TO NEPAL

Our number one tip when travelling to Nepal is to wear your walking boots and pack as many essential items as possible in your carry-on luggage. If your luggage is delayed we can do our best to kit you out to start the trek on time, but your worn-in boots are the one thing we cannot replace.

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food and drink

If you choose to eat outside your hotel, use your common sense when selecting where and what to eat, drink bottled water and avoid ice in drinks.

valuables

Please keep all money, passport and valuables on your person at all times.

Make sure your hotel room is kept locked, even if you just pop out for a few minutes.

left luggage

Any items you don't wish to take on the trek with you can be left securely at your Kathmandu hotel and collected when you return. Please make sure you have a spare bag for any items you are storing.

electrical sockets

There are 2 types of electrical sockets in Nepal – type D which are old UK style (3 round pins) and type C which are standard European style (2 round pins) – and are 220v, same as the UK. The type D socket is commonly found in India, so any adapter that is suitable for India will be the right size, and a European adaptor will be fine for the type C socket.

check in

Check in time will be between 12:00 and 2:00 pm, depending on the hotel. If you arrive on an early flight into Kathmandu, you may have to wait until this time for your room to be available.

Similarly, if you return at the end of your trek on an early flight from Lukla, you will not be able to check into your room straight away.

hotel accommodation

Your full day by day itinerary shows what is included in terms of hotel accommodation and meal basis. All of our pre- and post-trek accommodation is based in Kathmandu. Where your hotel basis is B&B, you can usually purchase snacks or meals at the hotel, which can be paid in Nepali Rupees or US Dollars.

HOTEL SAFETY

FIRE SAFETY: When you arrive at the hotel, take a moment to familiarise yourself with the layout and the procedures in the event of a fire, especially your escape routes and fire exits.

SWIMMING POOLS: Hotel pools may not have life guards, depth markings or non-slip surfaces around them. Please check the layout and depth of the pool before you use it.

TRIPS AND SLIPS: Physical guards and warnings of wet floors, uneven steps, holes or other trip hazards may not be provided, whether you are inside a building or out on the street, so extra care and attention may be required.

GETTING AROUND

Take care when crossing roads as the traffic may be coming from an unfamiliar direction, and may not stop as expected at pedestrian crossings. When travelling by taxi, make sure it is licensed; ideally ask your hotel to book one for you.

VEHICLES AND DRIVING STANDARDS

The general standard of driving throughout Nepal is poor and badly regulated. Roads in Kathmandu are very congested, many drivers are not properly licensed and vehicles are poorly maintained. During the monsoon season (June to September) many roads outside the Kathmandu valley are prone to landslides and may become impassable.

We insist on using a high standard of vehicle and driver for all of our transfers. In Nepal it is not a legal requirement to have seatbelts fitted in the back of vehicles, and while we try to use vehicles that do have rear seatbelts fitted, this cannot always be guaranteed. If you are unhappy about any aspect of the vehicle or the standard of driving, please speak to the driver or our local office immediately.

OUTAGES IN KATHMANDU

Nepal relies heavily on hydroelectric power which cannot provide a sufficient supply of power. As a result, the electricity is routinely cut for several hours each day to control demand, particularly during the driest months when the rivers are at their lowest and supply drops even further. The schedules for this load-shedding are issued in advance, so your hotel will normally display a timetable of electric cut offs for their district and will try and help as far as they can, but please be patient as these outages are outside their control.

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vaccinations

The standard vaccinations required are diphtheria, tetanus, typhoid and hepatitis A, but you should always consult your doctor or travel clinic for the most up to date advice.

dehydration

You can easily become dehydrated at high altitudes. The lower air pressure forces you to breathe more quickly and deeply, and you lose a lot of water through your lungs. You will also be exerting yourself, and sweating, and may even suffer from diarrhoea. As a result, you'll have to drink much more water than you normally would so you should drink at least 3 litres of fluids every day while trekking. Even when you don't feel thirsty you have to drink this amount as a minimum – preferably more. Stay on the look-out for signs of dehydration in yourself and your fellow trekkers. The most common symptoms include thirst, dry lips, nose or mouth, headache and feeling fatigued or lethargic.

health

ALTITUDE SICKNESS

Altitude sickness, also called Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), hypobaropathy and soroche, is an illness caused by exposure to low air pressure, especially low partial pressure of oxygen, which many trekkers experience at high altitudes. AMS is caused by exerting yourself at high altitudes, especially if you have not been properly acclimatised. It is most common at altitudes above 2400 metres. Your route to Mera Peak has been designed to aid your acclimatisation wherever possible, but the following will also help your body adjust:

Slow and steady: You need to keep your respiration rate low enough to maintain a normal conversation. If you are panting or breathing hard, you must slow down. There is no pressure on you to keep up with other members of your group.

Drink much more water than you think you need: Proper hydration helps acclimatisation dramatically. You need to drink at least three litres each day.

Diamox: There has been a lot of research on Diamox that shows it has been reasonably well proven to be helpful in avoiding AMS by speeding up the acclimatisation process. In the UK it is a prescription drug which must be prescribed by a doctor, but some doctors are reluctant to prescribe it. The concern is that by taking Diamox, people believe that they are immune from AMS and can ignore the symptoms. In reality, although Diamox can help prevent the symptoms, should symptoms still develop it means that you are not acclimatising and you have to take notice. Diamox is taken before you start trekking to prevent altitude sickness, not once you are on the trek and symptoms have developed.

MALARIA

There is no risk of malaria in Kathmandu and on the majority of Himalayan treks that we operate, due to the altitude. However, there is a risk of malaria in areas of Nepal below 1,500m, particularly in the Terai district, the lowland region of Nepal adjacent to the Indian border. This region includes Chitwan National Park, so if you are planning a safari extension to your trek, you need to plan anti-malarial medication for this part of your trip. In addition to taking medication, we would recommend you take every precaution to prevent mosquito bites by wearing long-sleeved trousers and shirts at dusk and dawn when the mosquitoes are active, and by using a DEET based mosquito repellent.

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flight safety in Nepal

You should be aware that flights in Nepal have a poor safety record compared to international flight standards. In 2013, all carriers from Nepal were put on an aviation banned list, preventing them from flying in EU airspace. This ban does not mean that these airlines are prevented from flying in Nepal, nor does it mean that an EU national cannot fly with one of these airlines. Since the ban, some airlines have been proactive and have retained an independent aviation safety expert to audit their operations. Wherever possible, we use one of these airlines.

domestic flights

FLIGHT SCHEDULES

The system for booking internal flights in Nepal is unlike anywhere else in the world as there is no such thing as a confirmed booking and departure time. For each itinerary, the airlines run shuttle planes many times daily, with the number of planned flights reflecting booked volumes. You cannot book for a particular timed flight!

When a booking is made, you are allocated to the airlines passenger departure list for that day and then allocated a flight based on when you booked. The first person to book KTM – Lukla on any date will be on Flight one. The further down the list of bookings you are the higher your flight number will be. For example, if you book with Tara Airlines and book reasonably far ahead you might be on Tara Flight 3. What this means is that at the start of the day Flight 1 will leave as soon as conditions at Lukla and Kathmandu are safe for take-off and landing. Once Flight 1 departs, Tara may have a second plane on this itinerary so Flight 2 may depart quite quickly. Flight 3 though may be the same plane that went out on Flight 1 so it has to go to Lukla and then return to Kathmandu before you can depart, so there will be a wait.

If there is fog at Lukla, all flights will be delayed. This might be for an hour or it may be all day and at any point until late in the afternoon nobody will know if any flights are going. If you book late, and are on Tara Flight 7 there is a much higher risk, if there are any delays, that your flight will not go at all.

An added confusion is that the airlines only have stamps with which they mark a boarding pass up to 4 so flight 5 becomes flight 1 again on your boarding pass although the airline knows which flight is which.

Inevitably this process is time-consuming and frustrating as you need to be at the airport early and then may have to wait all day before being told your flight is not leaving that day.

Please also note that there are no allocated seats on the plane so clients will not be given a specific seat number.

Please accept that delays at Lukla, and what appears to Westerners as total chaos, is beyond our control and is the same for all tour operators and travellers.

himalaya trekking

MERA PEAK



flight delays

The majority of our trekking itineraries in Nepal involves a domestic flight.

Airfields such as Lukla are among the most remote and difficult to land on in the world and are a challenge for even the most technically proficient pilots. It

is not uncommon for bad weather to cause lengthy delays, as the airport will be closed if the cloud cover is too great.

If possible you should allow some extra days in Kathmandu at the end of your trip so that we have some leeway if any of your flights are delayed.

Please be aware that in the event of a delay that affects your onward international flight, you will be responsible for re-booking and for any associated costs. These costs should be recovered from your insurer.

hotel availability

Please be aware that whenever you are checking into a hotel, whether on your normal itinerary or because of a cancelled flight, the hotel's policy on check-in times will apply. If you arrive before the check-in time the hotel will endeavour to get a room ready as soon as possible and you are free to use the hotel's facilities while you wait.

If you should require extra nights in Kathmandu before the trek due to a flight delay, there may be occasions when the hotel you were staying in the previous night is fully booked. We would therefore book you into a similar hotel.

domestic flights

PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF FLIGHT DELAYS

All of our trips to the Everest region begin and end with a short internal flight between Kathmandu and Lukla. Lukla is situated at 2800m and the airport can be shut down by adverse weather conditions.

In the event of a delay to your flight this is the procedure we follow. Apart from specific costs mentioned below, Kandoo Adventures will not be held responsible for additional costs incurred that result from a flight delay and no refunds will be payable.

Outward bound delays: day one

If your flight is delayed we will arrange transport back to your hotel and will cover the hotel cost and the cost of the transfers.

Outward bound delays: day two

If you can fly on the second day your trek will proceed as normal. We have time built into our itineraries to cope with this eventuality.

If it becomes clear that you will not be able to fly on day 2 our Guide will discuss with the group the possibility of chartering a helicopter. We will cover part of the cost of this ourselves and use the partial refund we receive on the flight to mitigate this cost. Depending on the number in the group, the net extra cost payable by each passenger will generally be between \$300-\$500pp depending on availability and demand. Your guide will ascertain the best price and let you know as soon as practicable.

If the group cannot reach an agreement on chartering a helicopter we will again arrange transfers back to a hotel. The cost of the second night in the hotel and any further nights is payable by you and should be recovered under the terms of your travel insurance. At this stage we will offer the group an alternative trek that can be completed safely in the time available. This is normally to the Annapurna region where flights are more reliable. If you decline this alternative, then effectively our service ends apart from the return airport transfer at the end of your trip. You are responsible for all additional costs incurred while you are in Nepal.

Inbound delays

Should there be a significant delay at the end of your trek, we will endeavour to get you on the first fixed-wing flights to Kathmandu available. Should helicopters be able to fly, we will discuss with the group the possibility of a charter. This will be on the same basis as described above.

If you have to stay in Lukla for an additional night, Kandoo Adventures will cover the cost of your lodge for one night. Any further nights are payable by you and should be recovered under the terms of your travel insurance.

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daily health checks

You will have a daily health check with your guides in which we fill out a Lake Louise AMS scoresheet, a well-tested method for assessing the symptoms of altitude sickness. This is supplemented by a pulse oxymeter test to measure your pulse and blood oxygen saturation. It is imperative that you answer all of the guide's questions honestly and report any changes in your health that may affect your ability to continue with the trek.

drinking water

On the trek we filter all the water that we give to you for drinking. You may wish to bring purification tablets as an extra precaution but they are not essential. Every morning we will fill up your water bottles or hydration bladder with at least 2 litres of water. Your guide will also be able to filter more water at your lunch stops if required.

hygiene

It is important to maintain a high standard of hygiene in what is a very difficult environment, to try to reduce stomach upsets. Hot water is not always available in the bathrooms at the teahouses, so you should carry anti-bacterial hand gel with you.

on your trek

On the trek you will be staying at teahouses in villages along the trail. These are fairly basic and generally consist of two wooden bench beds per room with mattresses, and shared toilet facilities. Whenever possible we will try to book en-suite rooms, but availability is very limited and rooms cannot be pre-booked. Showers are not always available and it tends to be just the communal areas that are heated. You are booked into the teahouses on a room only basis. Over the past few years, the teahouses have really developed their menus, and you can now get a choice of maybe 40 or 50 meals ranging from the basic dahl baht right up to yak steak with blue cheese sauce (although we don't recommend eating meat past Namche because of the time taken to transport meat to the higher villages). You choose exactly what you want to eat at the lodges and settle your bill each morning. We recommend you budget between \$25-30 per person per day for all your meals. This also allows for some sundry items such as internet access, use of chargers (yes, teahouses will charge you to plug your phone or camera in for an hour) and hot showers (afraid you will also have to pay for hot water in some locations.) If you intend to use the internet and showers at every teahouse, then expect to add an additional \$10 per day to your food budget. We do probably over-estimate the cost, but the last bank is in Lukla, so you have no access to money after this point. We would rather you have too much money with you than not enough. The menus in the teahouses are quite extensive and you pay more for western dishes. Soft drinks, crisps and chocolate bars are available, but will cost considerably more the further along the trail you go and can cost as much as a main meal! The room prices at the teahouses are based on you taking your meals within the teahouse - they offer discounted room pricing on the expectation that they will receive income from food. This is standard policy at all teahouses. You therefore cannot eat outside the teahouse, and you definitely cannot bring your own food into the teahouse. As you trek through the Arun Valley, there are a couple of villages that do not have teahouses, so on these nights you will be camping. You return to tea houses until you reach Mera Peak Base Camp, where you will be camping again until you have summited. We will provide the sleeping tents for these nights during your trip. We will also provide all your meals while you are camping.

THE GUIDE'S WORD IS FINAL

Once you set foot on the trail, your Lead Guide has overall responsibility for your health and welfare. You must listen carefully to all his instructions and follow them carefully. The Guide's ruling on any matter is final, especially in relation to an early descent.

TEMPERATURE

Throughout the trek, temperatures vary considerably with the altitude and time of day. A mountain range the size of the Himalaya creates its own local weather, which can be extremely variable and impossible to predict. Therefore, regardless of when you trek, you should always be prepared for wet days and cold nights.

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descent protocol

Your guides will do everything they can to help you summit Mera Peak, but their number one priority is your health. If you are showing signs of ill-health they will monitor the situation to see if things improve, before they make the decision for you to descend.

For trekkers whose condition is mild we will bring you down on foot with a team member. For more serious conditions, an emergency evacuation by helicopter will be required. Helicopter evacuation must be covered by your travel insurance, so make sure you are aware of the procedure required by your insurance company, or you may end up liable for the cost of the helicopter.

Any additional costs incurred as a result of descending early, including hotel accommodation in Kathmandu, must be paid locally.

on your trek

CREW TIPS

We realize that tipping may not be a common practice in all countries but for Nepal it is a standard practice that all operators support. The decision on how much to tip should be determined by how well the team served you while you were on the trek. Tips are always discretionary and if you are not happy with the service you have received you do not have to pay tips. Tips can be made in US dollars or Nepali Rupees. It is very important that US bills be new (post 2006), crisp and unturned.

We are members of the Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal and the Nepal Mountaineering Association, and follow their guidelines when recommending tip levels for guides and porters. We would suggest you budget \$200-\$250 per trekker for your tip contribution.

We say goodbye to our porters in Lukla before we return to Kathmandu. Any tips that you wish to give to the porters will need to be carried on the trek with you.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We ask that you do not attempt to communicate directly, or indirectly, with any of our guides either by social media, email or in any other way, after your trip. This includes sending friend requests on facebook or messaging on platforms like whatsapp. It is a condition of all guides employment contract that they do not communicate with clients directly. Please do not encourage them to break this policy as you will likely lead to their dismissal.

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friends and family

Many people like to leave a contact number with their families should they need to get a message to you while you are trekking. We would only relay messages up to you in an emergency; please do not expect us to pass on good luck messages. For most enquiries, it is best if they can contact our office during working hours listed. If the matter occurs out of hours and is deemed urgent, they should contact the office in Kathmandu directly.

important information

It is in the nature of a trip of this kind that arrangements and participants have to be flexible. While we use all reasonable endeavours to ensure a trip runs according to your itinerary, the day-to-day agenda and ultimate goal of the trip are taken as aims and not as contractual obligations. It is a necessary condition of your joining any of our trips that you accept this flexibility. Occasionally, we may have to make changes and we reserve the right to do so at any time.

contact information

While the vast majority of our treks are trouble-free, you may occasionally encounter a problem that can be resolved quickly and easily by following these steps:

LOCAL OFFICE

Our office in Kathmandu is your first point of contact for any issues that arise once you are on your way to Nepal, and for the duration of your time in country. Whether you have booked an airport transfer and your flight is delayed, or you need assistance exchanging money, we have English-speaking representatives who will be able to help you with any query, and they have the advantage of being in the same time zone. These contact details can also be found on your itinerary.

The below number includes the international dialling code, which you will need to add if you are calling from your mobile phone. If you are using a landline within the country, just omit the international code.

Contact telephone: +977 9851207386 or +977 9851207387

LEAD GUIDE

Once you are on your trek, you should speak to your lead guide about any problems, whether they relate to food, equipment or health. We would much prefer you to sort out any problems with them on the spot, rather than allow them to spoil your trek. Your guide is in contact with the office if further assistance is required.

If the lead guide is the source of your concern, you will have the opportunity to speak to one of the office representatives when you return to your post-trek hotel.

CONTACT KANDOO ADVENTURES

If your problem cannot be resolved locally, please either phone or email our UK office and we will do all we can to help you. It is best if you can call within our office hours when we are best equipped to deal with the situation. Our office hours are as follows (local UK time):

09:00 – 17:00 Monday to Thursday

09:00 – 16:00 Friday

Contact telephone: +44 (0)1283 499980

Contact email: sales@kandooadventures.com

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quick facts

Currency:
Nepali Rupee

Official languages:
Nepali

Time difference:
GMT + 5:45 hrs
EST + 10:45 hrs

Electricity:
220-250V / 50Hz

International dialling code:
+977

Nepal

For centuries, Nepal has been an attraction to many travellers, be they saints, philosophers, researchers or adventurers. This land-locked country rises from the jungles of the northern Indian plains to the towering Himalayas, an 800km stretch of rugged mountains that is home to eight of the ten highest mountains in the world, including the mighty Mount Everest. While the drama of success and failure has played out on these mountain giants, there is much more to this tiny nation. Religion permeates every facet of life with festivals, daily rituals, family celebrations and religious observances. Whether in the towns or the mountains, at every step there are temples and shrines to discover, a legacy of Hinduism, Buddhism and the other faiths that co-exist in Nepal.

For many people, the best way to experience Nepal's unrivalled combination of natural beauty and cultural riches is to trek through them. With trekking routes to suit all abilities, on even the shortest trek you can find rhododendron forests, small mountain villages, birds, monasteries and breath-taking landscapes, all in the company of the friendly people of Nepal.

how to book

- 1 Check availability**
Contact us by phone, email or through our website to check availability
- 2 Choose a date and route**
Choose a date and route and we will send you a detailed quote and itinerary. Our destination specialists are on-hand to answer any of your questions
- 3 Complete booking and payment**
When you are ready to book we will send you our booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards, sterling cheques or you can pay by bank transfer. Our standard terms are 20% deposit to secure your booking and full and final payment 8 weeks before departure. Kandoo Adventures is fully licensed and bonded as a tour operator. We hold an Air Traffic Organisers Licence (ATOL) number 10957 issued and bonded with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and are ABTA members. This means you can book your Kandoo holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected.