

12-DAY ADVENTURE

THE CHOQUEQUIRAO TREK

Peru

With over 12 years of experience providing memorable experiences on the ancient Incan trails, you are in safe hands with our experienced Peruvian team. Lead by our knowledgeable manager, Jose, our local staff are our priority and we ensure their welfare needs are aptly met, meaning they can focus their skills on making your trip a fantastic experience. When you trek with Kandoo Adventures, you may also rest in the knowledge that your trip is fully carbon offset as standard.

Choquequirao, meaning Cradle of Gold, is an Incan City built during the late 15th and early 16th century. Restoration of the site began in the 1970s and still continues today. As of 2014, nearly 50% of the site had been excavated.

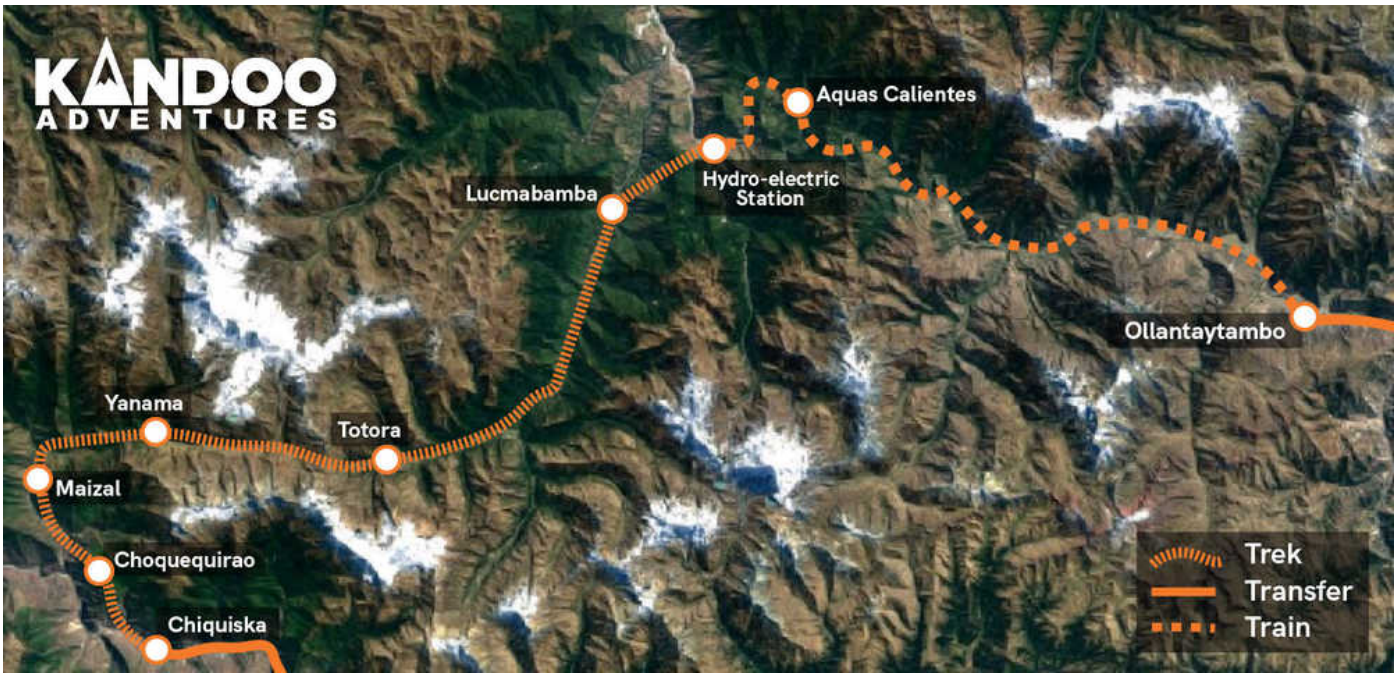
Choquequirao is located at 3,050 meters above sea level in the Cuzco region of the Province La Convención and can only be reached by hiking 2-3 days from the towns of Cachora, Huanipaca or Yanama. Our trek begins in Cachora, following the Apurimac Valley for two days to reach Choquequirao. We spend a full day exploring the archaeological site, which is larger but much quieter than Machu Picchu.

The trek from Choquequirao to Machu Picchu is more strenuous, starting with a 1500m descent and ascent to cross the Rio Blanco river, followed by two days where we will cross mountain passes over 4000m. Our trek finishes with a short train ride into Aguas Calientes, where we spend the night in a hotel before our tour of Machu Picchu.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Trek through the Andes up to 4700m
- Visit two Inca cities – Choquequirao and Machu Picchu
- High guide to client ratio

- Trip fully carbon offset as standard


KANDOO
ADVENTURES
Aquas Calientes
Hydro-electric
Station
Lucmabamba
Ollantaytambo
Yanama
Totora
Maizal
Choquequirao
Chiquiska
Trek
Transfer
Train

ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVE IN CUZCO

All trekkers need to organise their own flights to Cuzco Airport (CUZ). From the airport we will arrange an airport transfer for you.

Max. altitude: **3400 m**
Accommodation: **Hotel**

DAY 2

ACCLIMATISATION IN CUZCO

The city of Cuzco sits at an altitude of 3400m and is a great place to acclimatise before you start your Choquequirao trek. You'll have plenty of time to explore this charming city and soak up the local atmosphere. That evening you will meet your local Kandoo representative and have a full pre-trek briefing.

Max. altitude: **3400 m**
Accommodation: **Hotel**
Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 3

CUZCO TO CAPULIYUC TO CHIQUISKA

The trek starts with a 4-5 hour drive to Capuliyuc (2,800m) where we meet our muleteer team and have lunch. In the afternoon we'll begin our trek by hiking for 3-4 hours down into the Apurimac Canyon to our first campsite at Chiquiska at 1835m. The path is straightforward with a few switchbacks and downhill all the way, and there are fantastic views of the surrounding snow peaks and Choquequirao in the far distance.

Hiking time: **5 - 6 hours**
Descent: **1565 m**
Max. altitude: **3400 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

CHIQUISKA TO CHOQUEQUIRAO

We will wake early and descend from Chiquiska further into the valley for about 1 hour before crossing the Apurimac River. Once we have crossed the river we begin a two-hour ascent to Santa Rosa, a small campsite where we can rest and refill water bottles. From Santa Rosa we continue ascending, first to Marampata (2,913m) where we will have lunch, and then onto our campsite just below Choquequirao (3,035m). The trek between Santa Rosa and Choquequirao takes between 4-5 hours and is pretty tough. There are bathrooms and cold-water showers at the Choquequirao campsite.

Hiking time: **8 - 9 hours**
Ascent: **1200 m**
Max. altitude: **3035 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 5

TOUR OF CHOQUEQUIRAO

The archaeological complex of Choquequirao is large and can take a full day to explore properly. Archeologists have divided the site into 12 sections. You will be given a guided tour of the Citadel, visiting the ceremonial centre, main platform and the lower plaza. Towards dusk we might get lucky and spot condors that frequent this part of the region.

Max. altitude: **3035 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 6

CHOQUEQUIRAO TO MAIZAL

Today starts early with a gradual hike up and over the Choquequirao Pass at 3,300m, and then a descent into the Rio Blanco Valley (1,910m). At the foot of the valley is the river Rio Blanco where trekkers can swim before a tough and steep three-hour hike up to Maizal (3,000m).

Hiking time: **8 - 9 hours**
Ascent: **265 m**
Descent: **300 m**
Max. altitude: **3300 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 7

MAIZAL TO YANAMA VIA VICTORIA PASS

Day 7 starts with a long climb up to the Victoria Pass (4,200m) where we will see original paved Inca Trails. Once over the pass we descend down towards the small village of Yanama (3,500m), where we will camp for the night.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**
Ascent: **1200 m**
Descent: **700 m**
Max. altitude: **4200 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 8

YANAMA TO TOTORO

We start the day with a climb up to the Yanama Pass (4,668m) – the highest point on the trek. From here, spectacular views of Sacsayraoc peak dominate, and once we've crossed the pass, the largest peak in the area, Salkantay comes into view. From the pass the trail descends to the small village of Totora.

Hiking time: **8 - 9 hours**
Ascent: **1168 m**
Descent: **1268 m**
Max. altitude: **4668 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 9

TOTORO TO LUCMABAMBA

We start the long, winding descent of nearly 2,000 m to the Totora River. Trekking poles to reduce the impact of the descent on your knees come in handy throughout this day. We follow the Rio Santa Teresa for around 6-7 hours, trekking through cloud forest with a huge variety of butterflies, birdlife and vegetation. We will camp on the outskirts of Lucmabamba village. This campsite is located in a coffee farm and you will be able to taste the best coffee in Peru! There is also an option to visit the hot springs in Cocalmayo.

Hiking time: **8 - 9 hours**
Descent: **1300 m**
Max. altitude: **3400 m**
Accommodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 10

LA PLAYA TO AGUAS CALIENTES

From Lucamabamba the trail ascends for 4 hours through coffee and fruit plantations and cloud forest to a newly discovered Inca site called Llactapata. We will have an amazing view of Machu Picchu before the trail descends for two hours into the Urubamba Valley to the Hydroelectric Station where we catch the train to Aguas Calientes. You will overnight in a hotel and have a chance to swim in the town's famous hot springs.

Transport: **Train**
Hiking time: **7 - 8 hours**
Descent: **350 m**
Max. altitude: **2400 m**
Accommodation: **Hotel**
Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 11

TOUR OF MACHU PICCHU – TRANSFER TO CUZCO

Today, you will be given a guided tour of the Lost City of the Incas, which will last for around 2½ to 3 hours. There is also an option to climb Huayna Picchu, the famous mountain behind the ruins, but you will need to book a permit in advance. In the afternoon, we will catch the train from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo, where you will be met by our driver who will transfer you to your hotel in Cuzco.

Accommodation: **Hotel**
Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 12

ONWARD JOURNEY

After a much needed night's rest, we will bid you goodbye. We will collect you from your hotel and transfer you to Cuzco Airport for your departing flight.

Meals included: **Breakfast**

PLEASE NOTE

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.

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

The Choquequirao Trek is considered to be a **fairly challenging trek**. There is a 1,800 meter climb to start proceedings, however, with porters or pack horses, the climb is not too difficult. Altitude is generally not a problem on this trek, but a good level of fitness is required.

FOOD & DRINK

Staying well-fed on your trek is absolutely vital, especially when conditions are such that you might not want to eat or drink as much as you should. Because so many trekkers experience a loss of appetite at altitude, our head chef has developed **special menu** plans that are appealing, healthy, and filled with all the energy you need to make it to Machu Picchu. By default, our meals include **fresh fruit and vegetables** every day, as well as **fresh meat and fish**.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is usually fairly hearty. Of course, you'll also have hot drinks, generally a choice of tea, coffee or hot chocolate. Let your guide know if you are still hungry, or even if you think you could 'pack in a few more bites'. Our cooks always try to provide more food than necessary to ensure everyone gets a good meal.

LUNCH

Lunch is packed for you, to carry in your rucksack.

AFTERNOON TEA

Afternoon Tea is served at the end of the days walking, once you get to camp. In addition to tea and other hot drinks, there are plenty of snacks to help restore some of the energy you've just burned off.

DINNER

Dinners are quite filling. They usually begin with a nice hearty soup, and then a main course with fresh vegetables, and plenty of rice, pasta or potatoes, followed by a yummy dessert.

DRINKING WATER

On the trek, we filter and boil 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.

COCA TEA

Coca tea is thought to help relieve the symptoms of altitude sickness. In Cuzco, all the hotels have dried leaves and hot water available throughout the day so you can make your own tea whenever you wish. On the trek we will take coca leaf tea bags for you.

ACCOMMODATION

We use only the very best **high altitude mountain tents**, Eureka K-2 XT, to ensure you stay warm, dry and comfortable on your Choquequirao trek. Please bear in mind, these are proper mountain tents, designed to cope with extreme conditions so don't expect to be able to stand up and walk around inside!

Your meals will be taken in a separate mess tent where you will be able to sit comfortably, while you relax and chat to your team mates and enjoy the wholesome food that our cook has freshly prepared for you. Inside, you'll be pleased to find a table (of course) and a proper, comfortable chair. With a full 2 metres of headroom, even the tallest climbers will be able to stretch a bit, and move about without hunching over. They are fully waterproof, and regularly withstand the worst weather the Andes has to offer.

The hotels in we use in Peru all have western, flushing toilets. Whilst on the trek the toilet situation will be a little less luxurious. At camp each evening we will set up a **toilet tent**. This is a simple facility that provides a little privacy and comfort whilst on the trail. The toilet tent will contain a portable, sit down toilet. Whilst trekking, if you need to go you will have to find somewhere hidden, off the path and go wild. There's plenty of places to hide in the Peruvian forests!

Our pre- and post-trek accommodation is based in Cuzco, with an additional night in Aguas Calientes after the trek. Where your hotel basis is B&B, you can usually purchase snacks or meals at the hotel, which can be paid in Peruvian Sols, or often in US Dollars. Alternatively, there are plenty of restaurants in Cuzco within walking distance of your hotel.

TRANSPORT

We insist on using a **high standard of vehicle** and driver for all of our transfers. In Peru 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.

LUGGAGE

Bag Weight: 10kg

Kandoo Adventures operates a strict limit of 10kg for your main equipment bag. This limit includes your sleeping bag, even if it is rented from us. This is more than sufficient for your needs on the trek. Your bag will be weighed before you leave the hotel to start the trek and if it is overweight you will have to take items out and leave them at the hotel.

Additional porters can be hired but they will cost $25 per day

HOW DO I GET THERE?

There several good ways to get to Cuzco from the UK. The first is to fly KLM to Lima with a stopover in Amsterdam. The second is to fly with Air France who offer flights to Lima via Pairs, or alternatively you can use Iberia who fly to Lima via Madrid. From Lima you will have to get a domestic flight to Cuzco. Domestic airlines include LATAM, Avianca, Star Peru or Peruvian Air. We recommend flying with LATAM as their planes have the capability to land in the foggy conditions that can affect Cuzco and Lima. Most flights from Europe land in the evening, local time. Most flights for Cuzco don't leave until the morning, so if you don't fancy loitering in the airport all night (which we do not recommend), you'll need an overnight stay in Lima.

Trekkers starting off in North America have a much wider set of options. American Airlines and US Airways both offer flights into Lima, as do several other carriers. In addition to existing security measures at international airports, passengers MAY be required to show that the electronic devices in their hand luggage are charged up. You may therefore be asked to turn on any electronic devices such as mobile phones, tablets, e-books and laptops in front of the security team and/or demonstrate the item's functionality. We recommend that any electronic devices that you are carrying in your hand luggage are fully charged before you travel. If you have any further questions then you should check with your departure airport.

If you are changing airlines or re-checking your luggage at an airport on route, please ensure you leave a minimum of 3 hours between flights. This will account for any delays on arrival, travel time across airports (this can take longer than you think) and time taken to re-check baggage.

Travelling Responsibly

Here at Kandoo, we like to support our guests to make their travel more sustainable. As of 2025, we are offsetting the carbon on all of our trips from arrival in destination to dropping you back off at the airport. As we don't include flight travel in our trips these aren't included in our offsetting calculations, so we are providing you with the calculator below for you to do this yourselves.

eC02 Flights Calculator

BUDGET & CHANGE

The local currency is the **Peruvian Sol** which can be purchased in advance of your trip.If you want to change money when you arrive we can take you to an ATM or foreign exchange bureau. When changing money, request small denominations (10's, 20's and 50's) as the larger notes can be hard to spend. If you withdraw money from an ATM, you are likely to receive 100 sol notes. Peru is generally still a cash society, particularly whilst you are travelling through the smaller villages and towns it is worth having enough cash with you for personal expenses. ATMs will also not be available in these areas so ensure you have exchanged enough money whilst in Cuzco, before leaving on your trek. 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.

Peruvian Sol should be used as spending money and for tipping the crew.

In Cuzco, the cost of public transport is around 22p (33 cents) for a one-way ticket. If you prefer to travel by taxi, starting price is about £1.10 (US$1.40) for a 1km ride. When eating out, a meal in a budget restaurant for 2 people is around £5 (US$7) or a mid range restaurant (for 2 people) will cost around £22 (US$28). For souvenirs to take home, we recommend budgeting around £40 (US$50) which should get you plenty of little gifts. If you wish to buy a big blanket or poncho then budgeting a little more would be worthwhile.

Our recommended guidance for spending budget in Peru would be between £80-100 ($100-125) on top of your tips, to give you ample souvenir and meals out spending money.

TIPS

We realize that tipping may not be a common practice in all countries but for Peru 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 Peruvian Sols. It is very important that US bills be new (less than 10 years old), crisp and untorn.

These are the recommended tips **per trekker per day.** You will be provided with tip recommendations for your specific trip 3 weeks prior to departure that will give an accurate representation of how much you will need for tips based on the size of your group.

Lead guide: $20
Assistant Guide: $12
Cook: $12
Assistant Cook: $9
Porter (amount per porter): $6
Tent helper (amount per tent helper): $6
Horseman (amount per horseman): $10
Different crew members will be with you for different stages of your trip to Peru:

- Your guide/s will be with you every day in Peru.
- Your cook/s, porters, tent helpers and horsemen will be with you while you are on the trek itself (The number of porters, tent helpers and horsemen will differ depending on group size. You will be given this information three weeks before departure)
- An assistant guide and cook will only be necessary for larger groups (You will be given this information three weeks before departure)

We say goodbye to our crew at the Hidroelectrica station, before we continue to Aguas Calientes and Machu Picchu. Any tips that you wish to give to the cook and arrieros will need to be carried on the trek with you.

FORMALITIES & HEALTH

PASSPORT

Please double check that your passport is valid for 6 months beyond the date of arrival in Peru. 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.

VISA

Most visitors (including nationals from the UK, Europe, USA and Australia) do not require a visa to enter Peru, and will be granted a 183 day stay. You will need at least two blank visa pages in your passport. Certain nationalities not mentioned above must apply for a visa in advance, so check with your local Peruvian Embassy.

Chinese and Indian nationals may enter Peru without a visa if they have a UK, Canada, Australia, Schengen or US visa valid for a minimum of 6 months at the time of entry to Peru.

VACCINATIONS

The standard vaccinations required for Peru are diphtheria, tetanus, typhoid and hepatitis A, but you should always consult your doctor or travel clinic for the most up to date advice. Yellow Fever is recommended for some areas of Peru, which includes the Amazon basin.

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. Most of our treks in Peru do not exceed 4700m with the exception of the Ausangate Trek which will reach 5200m. If you are only doing the Short Inca trail your trek will not exceed 3500m. Please ensure that your insurance policy covers you for trekking at these altitudes.

We 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.

HEALTH

Altitude Sickness

Altitude sickness, called soroche in Peru and also known as Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) or hypobaropathy, is an illness caused by exposure to low air pressure, especially low partial pressure of oxygen, which many climbers 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. Our routes have 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 that 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 treking to prevent altitude sickness, not once you are on the mountain and symptoms have developed.

Malaria

There is no risk of malaria in Cuzco or on the Inca Trail due to the altitude. However, there is a risk of malaria in rural areas of Peru below 2,000m. This would include Tambopata National Park, so if you are planning an extension to the Amazon Rainforest, 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 mosquitos are active, and by using a DEET based mosquito repellent. If you are planning on taking Diamox, please let your doctor know, as daily malaria tablets taken alongside Diamox can cause an upset stomach and nausea. A weekly malaria tablet may be a better option, but you would need to discuss this with your doctor.

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 will have to drink much more water than you normally would and you should drink at least 3 litres of fluids every day while climbing. Even when you do not 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 climbers. The most common symptoms include thirst, dry lips, nose or mouth, headache and feeling fatigued or lethargic.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED BY KANDOO ADVENTURES

- High quality mess and sleeping tents with a comfortable insulated sleeping mat

RENTAL GEAR

If you've decided to rent gear, then below is a list of equipment available. Just let our team know what you'd like to hire at your Pre-Trek Briefing.
All payments are made locally in US Dollars (cash only):

North Face 0° Sleeping Bags $30 per trek
Trekking Poles $20 per trek
Duffle Bag $5 per trek

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. The sleeping bags weigh approximately 2kg each

CLOTHING TO BRING

HEADGEAR

- Warm beanie style hat – knitted or fleece
- Neck gaiter or scarf - 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)

UPPER BODY

- Thermal or fleece base layer (x1)
- Long sleeve shirt/tshirt – light or medium weight, moisture wicking (x 1)
- Short sleeved shirt/tshirt – lightweight, moisture wicking (x2)
- Fleece or soft shell jacket (x1)
- Insulated jacket – down or primaloft
- Lightweight water/windproof hard shell outer jacket
- Poncho – a cheap plastic poncho is the best way to cope with a sudden downpour
- Gloves – lightweight, fleece or quick drying fabric

LEGS

- Trekking shorts (x1)
- Trekking trousers – light or medium weight (x1) – convertible trousers work well
- Waterproof hard shell trousers – ski pants work fine

FEET

- Trekking boots – mid weight with good ankle support
- Training shoe or similar – to wear around camp
- Mid-weight trekking socks (x3 pairs)
- Breathable, high-wicking liner socks (x2 pairs)

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Small Rucksack or Daypack (25-30 litres) to carry water and personal items
- Lightweight duffle bag (approx 50 litres) – max weight when full should be 10kg. This weight restriction includes your sleeping bag, whether you brought one with you or rented one from us. Your duffle will be carried by a mule
- Sleeping bag (3 season or 0 Deg C) and compression sack
- Trekking poles
- Water bottle or hydration bag – must be able to carry 1.5-2L of water

OTHER ACCESSORIES

- Sunscreen high SPF
- Toiletries, **including toilet paper**, wet wipes and hand sanitiser – please carry all rubbish back off the trek
- Camera and spare batteries
- Personal medication and first aid kit
- Insect repellent – ideally contains DEET
- Personal snacks and energy bars – dried fruit and nuts are also a good source of energy
- Isotonic drink powder / energy drink powder to mix in with your water. This improves flavour and helps replace electrolytes
- Microfibre towel for wiping hands and face each day
- Ear plugs, if you are a light sleeper
- Pee bottle, if you prefer not leaving the tent at night
- Dry bag (only required if your main duffle bag is not waterproof)

HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

1 CHOOSE YOUR DATE AND CHECK AVAILABILITY

A full list of available dates can be found on our website.

2 CONTACT US

Contact us by phone, email or through our website. We will answer any questions you may have and send you a personalized itinerary and quote.

3 COMPLETE BOOKING AND PAYMENT

When you are ready to book, we will send you a link to our online booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards and require a low 20% deposit to secure your place.