

KANCHENJUNGA CIRCUIT, NEPAL



At Pangpema with views of Nepal and Tent Peaks



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HIGHLIGHTS

-) Our itinerary visits the North and South Base Camps of Kanchenjunga as well as crossing a high pass called Mirgin La. This trek has been described by some as one of the finest trails in Nepal.
-) The mountain views are truly sensational, you will see Wedge Peak (6,750m), Mera (6,344m), Nepal Peak (6,910m), the Twins (7,351m), Jannu (7,710m), Koptang (6,147m), Rathong (6,679m) and the Kabrus (all over 7,000m) and of course the five peaks of Kanchenjunga all over 8,000m.
-) It would appeal to anyone who is looking for a challenging trek in a remote region of Nepal visited by fewer other trekkers. This is a culturally interesting journey with two days exploring Kathmandu and then while on trek you will see Rais, Limbus, Sherpas and Tibetans.
-) Roland, owner and founder of The Mountain Company, has been on this trip and modified the itinerary based on this experience. He will be able to answer any questions you might have.

REASONS TO CHOOSE THE MOUNTAIN COMPANY FOR KANCHENJUNGA CIRCUIT

-) Our itinerary has been carefully designed to ensure sufficient acclimatisation as well as including a number of spare days to maximise the chance of crossing the passes and completing the Circuit.
-) Western branded tents are used for all of our camping treks in Nepal. These are three person domed tents with plenty of space for two people sharing plus gear.
-) The Mountain Company will receive bespoke weather forecasts for the Kanchenjunga region from EverestWeather.com throughout the duration of this trek.



-) We bring a satellite phone for logistical, safety and personal use. It is essential for your guide to have reliable communications with us for logistics, planning and group safety.
-) We also send GPS locator called SPOT Adventures so your friends and family can track your progress during the trek.
-) We provide each porter with windproof jacket & trousers, walking boots and shelter as per IPPG Guidelines.
-) There will be a range of tasty meals for breakfast, lunch and supper. We also bring along a supply of chocolate bars, Pringles, biscuit and nuts.
-) We bring a comprehensive first aid kit from UK (Life Systems Mountain Leader) plus high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines. There will also be a portable altitude chamber (PAC or Gamow bag).
-) Pre trip support will be given by Roland via email, phone or face to face meetings. In the past members have arranged to meet up prior to the trek.

TESTIMONIALS

“The trek was great and on reflection, perhaps enjoyed it more than any other trek I’ve been on. This is largely down to it being a stunningly diverse trek, a very good leader, excellent porters/kitchen staff and a good group.” **Helen Doughty (UK)**

“The trip really was superbly organized and we were looked after extremely well by the efficient team, for whom nothing was too much trouble. Almas is a good leader and his ability to converse with the Nepali staff in Hindi is a big advantage. Your Sirdar, Jire Rai, is superb too and a wonderful human being. He is a major asset to the Mountain Company.” **Nick Lewis (UK)**

“Regarding our group leader, Almas, I would not have a negative comment to make. He was friendly and relaxed at all times and explained/justified all of his decisions very clearly. Despite clearly having masses of experience in the Himalayas he doesn’t make every conversation about him and his



previous trips - refreshing! The Sirdar, Jiri, worked incredibly hard - nothing was too much trouble and friendly throughout. The kitchen crew worked wonders and I was impressed with the condition of the tents.” **Jim Valentine (UK)**

“This was an astonishingly good trek. Culturally, environmentally and topographically it manages to pack in just about everything anyone could possibly want from any Himalayan trip. This was further enhanced by an excellent team who were dedicated to the safety and happiness of their guests and the trek leader's superb forward-planning skills and empathy with the staff.

As well as Almas (the trek leader), special mention goes to the Sirdar, Jire Rai. It was good to meet up with him again (he was the Sirdar on a Kanchenjunga trek I did a few years ago). His calm and cheerfull nature is as big an asset to any trek as his skill and experience. The catering/kitchen team also deserve recognition. They are magicians who, in defiance of all the laws of physics, manage to conjure up delicious, and sometimes surprisingly ambitious meals for large numbers of people with just camp-cooking equipment in frequently harsh weather/terrain. Anyone joining a Mountain Company high altitude trek with the idea of losing weight is out of luck. I would highly recommend this trek to anyone.” **Graham Duthie (UK)**



KANCHENJUNGA CIRCUIT

Total number of days	27 days
Grade & days trekking	Strenuous, 21 trekking days
Accommodation	5 nights hotel, 21 nights camping
2018 price from Kathmandu	£3,195 (US\$4,175 or €3,595)
2019 price from Kathmandu	£3,195 (US\$4,175 or €3,595)
Minimum group size	5
Dates	April 9 th to May 5 th 2019 (Easter: April 21st) October 29 th to November 24 th 2019 April 7 th to May 3 rd 2020 October 27 th to November 22 nd 2020



THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

-) Internal flight to/from Kathmandu and Bhadrapur.
-) All transfers including airport collections.
-) Twin share room at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador in Kathmandu.
-) Breakfast only in Kathmandu, all meals included while on trek.
-) Twin share tents while on trek using our Western branded tents. These are three person domed tents with plenty of space for two people sharing plus gear.
-) All trekking arrangements including permits and fees, tents, Western and Sherpa guides, porters and cook.
-) The portage allowance for your main bag to be carried by a porter is 15kg. For the internal flights the weight allowance is 15kg for your main bag checked into the hold and 5kg for day pack carried with you inside the aircraft.
-) Bespoke weather forecasts for Kanchenjunga region from EverestWeather.com throughout the duration of this trek.
-) Kanchenjunga trekking map given to you on arrival to Kathmandu.
-) Rubberised luggage tags posted to you before departure.
-) Full financial protection for all monies paid to us through our membership of Association of Bonded Travel Operators Trust (our ABTOT membership number is 5365) and having an Air Travel Organiser's Licence (our ATOL number is 10921).
-) Pre departure support and advice from The Mountain Company by email, phone or face to face meetings in London. After booking with us we will send our comprehensive "Nepal Pre Trip Information" notes.



THE FOLLOWING SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IS AVAILABLE:

Single room supplement in Kathmandu	£190 (US\$240 or €210)
Single tent supplement	£300 (US\$375 or €330)

Please note that if you are a single person booking on one of our trips you do not have to pay the single room supplement, this is only payable if you specifically request to have a room or tent to yourself. You will not have to pay this for this option if you happen to end up with a single room or tent due to odd numbers on the trip.

THE FOLLOWING IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

-) International flight to/from Kathmandu.
-) Travel & trekking insurance.
-) Nepal visa for 30 day.
-) Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu.
-) Personal clothing & equipment, please see the Appendix for suggested kit list.
-) Tips (guidance on amounts included in our “Nepal Pre Trip Information” notes).
-) Other items not listed in “What is included”.

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

The Mountain Company carefully selects and screens potential participants applying to join our groups to ensure the trip is an appropriate objective for you. We have a number of pre-trip questions asking information about your outdoor experience, training, experience, medical conditions and fitness. To access the pre-trip questions please send in your application by clicking on the “**Apply now**” **button** on the trek webpage. After review of your replies we might contact you by telephone or email for further information to aid our selection process.



Please ensure you have done your own research about Kanchenjunga Circuit trek by reading our pre trip documents (Trip Dossier, Trip Grading and Trip Reports published on TMC blog) to ensure you have a realistic idea of what to expect. Every trip organised by The Mountain Company has been graded based on four factors: daily walking times, altitude, terrain and remoteness.

INTRODUCTION

This is a long and challenging walk around Mt. Kanchenjunga visiting both North and South Base Camp.

This has been described by many people as the finest trekking route in Nepal. It is a long trek going deep into the remote mountain ranges on Nepal's border with Sikkim and Tibet. The trail explores the area around Kanchenjunga the third highest mountain in the world. You will see a wide range of scenery from lush, tropical jungle through to rhododendron, chestnut and oak forests and then at higher altitudes into the alpine zone. You will see a range of Nepalese culture and life-style from Rai and Limbus to Tibetan Buddhist villages.

The route starts by approaching the north side of Kanchenjunga where you see views of Tent peak, Nepal peak, Cross peak and then at Base Camp Kanchenjunga itself becomes visible. After Pangpema the trek returns to Ghunsa and then crosses the Mirgin La pass over to the south side of Kanchenjunga. Once over this pass we visit the yak pastures of Ramche and Oktang where there are impressive views of the south west face of Kanchenjunga.

DETAILED ITINERARY

It is our intention to keep to the day by day itinerary detailed below, although there might be some flexibility due to local conditions or other factors beyond our control. If this is the case the trek leader will do everything possible to work out the changes to the itinerary in order to minimise your inconvenience.



Day 1. Arrive Kathmandu and join the tour at the hotel.

You will be met on arrival at Kathmandu airport and driven back to the hotel. Please provide travel plans on booking and we will arrange the pick-up and transfer. **Overnight at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador (Meals: None).**

Day 2. In Kathmandu

A day for group briefing and to sort out trekking permits. **Overnight at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador (Meals: B).**

Day 3. Fly to Bhadrapur, drive to Ilam- 4 hours driving.

We take the morning flight to Bhadrapur and then drive in a private bus to Ilam where we spend the night in a hotel. **Overnight at Ilam hotel (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 4. Drive to Taplejung/ Suketar- 5 hours driving, trek to Mitlung (921m)- 4 hours walking.

This morning we leave early and drive passing through tea and cardamom plantations. During our drive we stop at the top of a pass of which we get our first magnificent views of Mount Kanchenjunga and Mount Jannu in the far distance. We drive onto Taplejung where on arrival we meet our trekking crew. After lunch we start the trek by making a steep descent to the Tamur river to reach the village of Mitlung. Today and for the next couple of days the path is often wet, muddy and slippery so two trekking poles are definitely required. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 5. Trek to Chirwa (1,270m)- 6 hours walking [11.5km. 650m ascent. 300m descent].

From camp the trail descends to the Tamur river passing several villages. This is a fertile area with a range of crops including rice, millet, potatoes and vegetables. There is a descent to a wooden bridge crossing the Thiwa Khola , then some more ups and downs before arriving at Chirwa. The village of Chirwa has a bazaar, a few lodges and some shops. We camp a short walk from the village in a large field among huge boulders. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 6. Trek to Sekathum (1,660m)- 5 hours walking. [10km. 580m ascent. 260m descent].

The trail follows the Tamur river along the valley floor and after a couple of hours we arrive to Taplechok at 1,380m where our trekking permit will be checked at the



park gate. From Taplechok we cross a suspension bridge over the river to walk on the west bank along a path where cardamom can be seen growing among the forest. Cardamom is an important cash crop especially prevalent in the middle hills of east Nepal.

We will have lunch at a lodge in Phembu (3 ½ hours) then the trail starts to ascend above Tamur river to Lelep at 1,750m. We descend to cross a suspension bridge over Tamor river to enter the more narrow Ghunsa Khola Valley and then on to our camp at Sekathum. This is a Tibetan village and it is from here you get the first views of the high Himalaya where Jannu is visible on a clear day up the Ghunsa valley. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 7. Trek to Amjilossa (2,510m)- 6 hours walking [10km. 965m ascent. 160m descent]

We cross the suspension bridge over Ghunsa river at Sekathum camp and then follow the path through dense forest. In places the trail is steep and narrow as we walk through a dramatic gorge. We normally have lunch at one of the basic lodges in Solima. After lunch we follow a switchback trail up through trees reaching Amjilossa high above the gorge. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 8. Trek to Gyabla (2,730m)- 5 hours walking [7km. 750m ascent. 450m descent].

From Gyabla there is a short ascent through lush bamboo, oak and rhododendron forests to cross a small ridge. We descend towards Ghunsa Khola at a place called Thyanyani (2,400m) where there are several stone shelters. The trail makes several short climbs and descents before passing a large waterfall and a final steep and rocky ascent to Gyabla. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 9. Trek to Ghunsa (3,595m)- 5 hours walking [10.5km. 830m ascent. 200m descent].

From Gyabla, the valley opens out and we walk along an easier path for most of the way to Phole. It will start to get cooler today as we climb above 3,000m. At the same time the vegetation changes and we will see more rhododendrons and azaleas. Before arriving to Phole we pass through the winter village for Ghunsa in a wide plateau. At Phole village it is worth having a look at the monastery and exploring the village where at some houses you can see the ladies weaving carpets.



From Phole it takes a further 1 ½ hours to reach the larger village of Ghunsa. This is a picturesque Tibetan village with wooden houses covered in colourful prayer flags. There are several lodges and shops in the village and a small Kanchenjunga Conservation Area office along with a couple of gompas. We will camp in the garden of one of the lodges however will use their dining room for meals. There are hot showers available in the lodge and also a small shop. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 10. Acclimatisation day at Ghunsa (3,595m).

An acclimatisation walk will be organised today along the route to Lobsang La. This is a good option as the trail gains height to 4,000m in about 3 hours from camp and 2 hours to return to Ghunsa. This was a good walk for acclimatising purposes by following the rule “climbing high and sleeping low”. This will help your body adjust to the gain in altitude and help you adapt over the next three days as you travel up to the northside Kanchenjunga Base Camp. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 11. Trek to Khambachen (4,050m)- 6 hours walking [10.5km. 830m ascent. 200m descent].

From Ghunsa the trail makes a gradual ascent through pine and rhodendron forests along the east bank of the Ghunsa Khola passing several mani walls and chortens along the way. After three hours walking we crossing a bridge over Ghunsa Khola and will have lunch in a grassy area called Rampuk Kharka (3,720m). Today as you gain altitude the mountain scenery becomes ever more spectacular and higher up before the landslide area the dramatic north face of Jannu is visible. Be careful when crossing this landslide as there is a risk of rockfall from above. The trail contours the hillside then descends to Khambachen. Khambachen is a Tibetan settlement with about a dozen houses nestled in a grassy plain with mountains all around. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 12. Acclimatisation day in Khambachen.

We spend two nights at Khambachen in order to help your acclimatisation before moving up over 750m in altitude to Lhonak. We recommend you join a short walk organised by our guides and then spend the rest of the day resting and relaxing around camp. The walk up Nupchu Khola from Khambachen is well worth doing for the impressive views of Mount Jannu. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**



Day 13. Trek to Lhonak (4,785m)- 4 to 5 hours walking [10.5km. 820m ascent. 150m descent].

From Khambachen the trail contours through azalea and rhododendron along a lateral moraine passing through a seasonal yak herder's camp at Ramtang (4,370m). After an hour or so the trail becomes rockier and we pass under a landslide area. Like for the landslide before Khambachen it is best to keep moving at a steady pace and to keep alert for any rockfall.

We climb through open rocky fields and then cross moraines North West of the Kanchenjunga Glacier to Lhonak. The campsite at Lhonak is near several large stone huts and has incredible views of Wedge Peak (6,750m), Mera (6,344m), Nepal Peak (6,910m), Twins (7,351m) among others. You cannot see the main peak of Kanchenjunga from Lhonak so for this view tomorrow we will walk up to Pangpema. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 14. Day trek to Pangpema at Northside Base Camp of Kanchenjunga (5,143m), return to Lhonak- 6 to 7 hours walking.

From Lhonak the trail ascends along the lateral moraine from Kanchenjunga Glacier for about two hours. After passing through several sections of loose rock and landslide area the trail climbs less steeply to reach the stone huts in a grassy area at Pangpema in a further two hours. The view of the vast north face of Kanchenjunga from Pangpema is very impressive. After having lunch while enjoying the mountain vista we start the return walk back to Lhonak taking about 3 hours. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 15. Return to Ghunsa (3,595m)- 8 hours walking [20km. 275m ascent. 1600m descent].

Walk back along the same trail through Kambachen to Ghunsa village. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 16. Trek to High Camp (approx. 4,100m) before the Mirgin La pass- 5 hours walking [7.7km. 959m ascent. 160m descent].

From Ghunsa we follow a steep rocky trail through the forest then along a ridge with a short, steep section to Sele La pass at 4,290m. The views are fantastic and you can clearly see High Camp which is about half an hour further walking from the pass. High Camp is well positioned in sheltered spot with a couple wooden lodges



and a small lake. From here you can see Mount Makalu in the far distance.

Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).

Day 17. Cross the Mirgin La (4,663m) and to Tseram (3,870m)- 8 hours walking [9.6km. 725m ascent. 1050m descent].

After an early start from High Camp we follow a good trail as it ascends to our first pass Sinion La at 4,440m. From here the trail contours the hillside and a short steep climb brings you to Mirgin La Pass at 4,480m. The trail then descends briefly before contouring round before a final short steep climb brings you to the top of Sinelapche La Pass at 4,840m. From the top of every pass you will be rewarded with magnificent views. From the last pass there is a 1,000m descent on a trail past a small lake to Tseram which is a small settlement located above the Simbua Khola. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 18. Trek to Oktang (4,730m) and back to Ramche (4,580m)- 7 to 8 hours walking [14km. 1,024m ascent. 400m descent].

Today we walk up to Ramche for lunch where we pass the snout of the Yalung glacier into an ablation valley. All the peaks to the east straddle the India-Nepal border- Koptang (6,147m), Rathong (6,679m) and some of the Kabrus which are all over 7,000m. There is a lake and a meadow along with two stone houses at Ramche and often blue sheep can often be seen on the grassy slopes above.

In the afternoon we follow the ablation valley to Oktang, the whole cirque is above 7,500m and the three main summits all over 8,400m can be seen. The climbing route to the summit of Kanchenjunga, first climbed by Joe Brown and George Band in 1955 can be seen from Oktang. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 19. Trek to Tortong (3,000m)- 7 to 8 hours walking [16.5km. 62m ascent. 912m descent].

The trail descends through Tseram and follows the river in rhododendron forest to Tortong where we camp for the night. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 20. Trek to Yamphudin (2,080m)- 7 to 8 hours walking [10.5km. 788m ascent. 1800m descent].

From Tortong it is about 3 hours to lunch as we have 650m to ascend. The trail climbs steeply through mossy forest and past the landslide that happened in 2013 to the pass at Lamite Bhanjang for lunch. After lunch the trail descends quite



steeply on a good path for about 2 hours before crossing Imja Khola. The trail then contours round the hillside before descending to Yamphudin. This village has a mixed community of Sherpas, Rais, Limbus and Gurungs and there is also the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area office. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 21. Trek to Mamanke (1,810m)- 5 hours walking [7.2km. 490m ascent. 662m descent].

After leaving the lovely village of Yamphudin we take the undulating path high above the river to Mamankhe. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 22. Trek to Kande Bhanjang (2,170m)- 6 hours walking [11.2km. 1100m ascent. 744m descent].

From Mamanke the trail enters a side canyon and crosses a stream on a long suspension bridge before climbing to Ponphe village. The trail climbs to two tea shops on the ridge above then begins a traverse through a series of valleys past several villages. The trail continues up to Kande Bhanjang where we camp for the night. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 23. Trek to Lali Kharka (2,276m)- 6 hours walking [10km. 978m ascent. 842m descent].

The trail traverses a ridge to the Limbu village of Khunjari and then descends to Pha Khola. From here one ascends through Pokhara and Shimu villages to Thenbewa then continues through forest to Lali Kharka where we camp for the night. **Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).**

Day 24. Trek to Suketar (2,300m)- 3 hours walking.

The trail descends to the Pha Khola and climbs steeply through Pokhara and Shimu villages to Thenbewa. It then continues through forest to Lali Kharka and on to a ridge from where it descends gradually to the airfield at Suketar. We have now completed an amazing journey around the Nepalese side of Kanchenjunga!

Overnight camping (Meals: B,L,D).

Day 25. Drive to Bhadrapur- 11 hours driving.

Overnight at local hotel (Meals: B,L,D).

Day 26. Fly to Kathmandu.

Overnight at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador (Meals: B).

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Day 27. Fly back home.

Transfer to Kathmandu airport for the flight back home. End of trip.

YOUR COMPLETE FINANCIAL PROTECTION

The Mountain Trekking Company Ltd (trading as The Mountain Company) is a fully licensed and bonded tour operator. For flight inclusive packages sold to UK residents these will be covered by our Air Travel Organisers Licence (our ATOL number is 10921). For packages that do not include flights and for packages sold to customers outside of the UK your financial protection is covered by our membership of Association of Bonded Travel Organisers' Trust ("ABTOT"). Our ABTOT membership number is 5365.



Our membership of these organisations means that you can book with us in complete confidence that all monies paid to us for trips are protected.

THREAT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Participants should be aware trekking, mountaineering and travelling in a developing country are activities that involve a risk of personal injury or death. As a condition of booking you must accept these risks and be responsible for your own actions and involvement.

Adventure travel requires an open and flexible attitude. You may experience extreme conditions, unpredictable weather and last minute changes to the itinerary

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beyond our control. The ability to work in team is an important aspect of all of our trips.

As a part of our planning process we have performed a detailed threat and risk assessment for our Kanchenjunga Circuit trek. It is worth pointing out all of our trips have a certain degree of risk, this is of course part of the attraction of adventure travel and why so many people choose to join this type of holiday. However by identifying the potential hazards on Kanchenjunga Circuit we can assess the level of risk and implement control measures to reduce this happening.

Our full threat and risk assessment for Kanchenjunga Circuit is available to clients on request. For your information we have listed below a summary of the significant risks and hazards identified by us:

-) Falls and trips resulting in physical injury eg. slipping on ice or falling off the path.
-) Altitude illness including but not limited to AMS, HACE and HAPE.
-) Getting lost or becoming separated from group eg. crossing Mirgin pass in whiteout.
-) Severe bad weather and conditions when camping eg. at Mirgin La High Camp.
-) Climatic injuries (dehydration, sun burn, heat exhaustion, hypothermia or heat stroke).
-) Crossing a river with no bridge resulting in drowning and/ or a fall.
-) Rock fall and landslides.
-) Snow and ice avalanches eg crossing Mirgin La pass.
-) Lightning strike.
-) Wildlife, pack animals (eg. donkeys or horses) or stray dogs. Pack animals have been known to knock people off the path. Dogs can attack and bite, we advise you discuss rabies vaccination with your doctor.
-) Earthquake.
-) Risk of fire in the hotel or lodge.



-) Endemic local diseases. We advise you discuss vaccinations with your doctor before departure.
-) Physiological injury such as heart attack, appendicitis, hernia, toothache etc. in a remote area.
-) Road traffic or flight accident [*see paragraph "Internal flights in Nepal" for further information*].
-) Contaminated food and/ or water.

This trip visits a remote area where you are away from normal emergency services and medical facilities. In case of a serious injury requiring hospitalisation evacuation could take up to several days and may impede your ensuing recovery. Helicopters are the most usual means of evacuation, however they are not always available or they may be hindered by poor weather and flying conditions.

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT TOUR OPERATORS ("AITO")

The Mountain Company is a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) and we have agreed to abide by the terms of the AITO Quality Charter.

AITO is the Association for independent and specialist holiday companies. Our member companies, usually owner-managed, strive to create overseas holidays with high levels of professionalism and a shared concern for quality and personal service. The Association encourages the highest standards in all aspects of tour operating. For more information please take a look at <http://www.aito.com/>





ETHICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Mountain Company is committed to adopting a responsible attitude to the areas we visit. We are guests of the communities visited and with some thought and care we can ensure that everyone benefits from the experience. We have developed a Responsible Tourism policy which aims to ensure that The Mountain Company and its clients act in a way that is socially, environmentally and culturally sound.

In 2017 the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) launched Project PROTECT in recognition of the important role that destinations play in the future of the travel industry. The aim of this project is to encourage sustainable tourism and to nurture the destinations for tomorrow's travellers. The PROTECT acronym stands for People / Resources / Outreach / Tourism / Environment / Conservation / Tomorrow.

This project is led by Professor Xavier Font of the University of Surrey and each AITO member has to publish an annual pledge and report back at the end of the year on how they got along. To see The Mountain Company's Project PROTECT pledges for 2018 and 2017, please take a look at our [Sustainable Tourism page on AITO website](#).



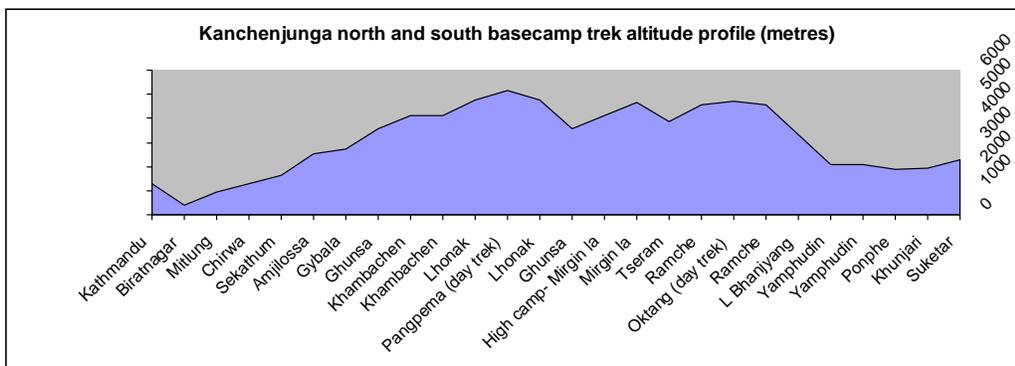
We work closely with the International Porter Protection Group and abide by their five guidelines for porter protection, their website is at www.ippg.net. We also have partnered with Kathmandu Environmental Education Project in Nepal, their website is at www.keepnepal.org



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

ALTITUDE AND ACCLIMATISATION

Our Kanchenjunga Circuit itinerary has been designed for gradual acclimatisation to take place, take a look at the altitude profile for the itinerary below:



There are ways of helping the acclimatisation process, as described below:

-) Walk slowly: there is plenty of time included in the itinerary so there is no need to rush, go at your own pace and enjoy the incredible views!
-) Drinks lots of water: it is easier for your body to acclimatise when hydrated so drink water and avoid coffee, tea and alcohol.
-) Consider taking diamox (acetazolamide): before using this drug we recommend consulting a doctor and thoroughly researching the pros and cons.

Please remember even the fittest and healthiest person can develop one of the altitude illnesses: AMS (acute mountain sickness), HACE (high altitude cerebral edema) and/ or HAPE (high altitude pulmonary edema). The symptoms of these illnesses are listed below, if any of these occur when you are on trek please immediately tell your guide.

Symptoms of AMS:

-) Tiredness

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-) Dizziness
-) Nausea or if severe, vomiting
-) Poor sleep

Symptoms of HACE:

-) Usually preceded by AMS
-) Like “Severe AMS” also with severe headache unresponsive to painkillers; confusion and physical clumsiness (ataxia).

Symptoms of HAPE:

-) Fluid in the lungs: cough, tiredness, breathlessness out of proportion to exercise especially at rest and worse when lying flat.
-) Often symptoms start later (at night or after 24 to 48 hours at new altitude).
-) Often occurs without AMS (often no headache)
-) But you can have AMS and HACE too.

If you have symptoms of altitude illness (AMS, HACE or HAPE) you must not ascend in altitude. If you have HACE or HAPE you must descend to nearest health post (if available) or seek medical help.

If you have only mild symptoms of AMS you should rest, drink fluids, try to eat, keep warm. If symptoms go away then you can go up. If symptoms get worse you have to descend in altitude escorted by one of our guides (someone with altitude illness must never descend alone).

For further information we suggest you take a look at the following websites:

High Altitude medicine website:

<http://www.high-altitude-medicine.com>

Medex Travel at High Altitude:

<http://www.medex.org.uk/v26%20booklet.pdf>



BMC website:

<http://www.thebmc.co.uk/Feature.aspx?id=1746>

COMMUNICATIONS

We bring a Thuraya satellite phone for logistical, safety and personal use. Personal calls charged at £4 (US\$5) per minute and £2 (US\$3) to send and receive SMS text.

ACCOMMODATION IN KATHMANDU

For our Kanchenjunga Circuit trek we use several hotels in Kathmandu depending on availability. They are as follows:

Hotel Tibet is located in Lazimpat next to the Radisson. Hotel Tibet is our usual hotel for our standard trips in Nepal as our clients enjoy staying at this property due to its good location, comfortable rooms and high level of service. There is a garden terrace next to the restaurant on the ground floor and the roof terrace with the Yeti Bar overlooking the city. For more information on Hotel Tibet please take a look at their website <http://www.hotel-tibet.com.np/>

Hotel Ambassador is located in Lazimpat not far from Hotel Tibet and Manaslu. This hotel was rebuilt and opened in Spring 2017 with well-appointed rooms including both King size and twin beds, complimentary wifi, tea & coffee, iron & board, combined bath & shower. The rooms are a good size at 30m² and are well decorated with original art. The rooms have air conditioning and are sound proofed for quiet nights rest. For more information on Hotel Ambassador please take a look at their website: <http://www.ambassadornepal.com/>

There are store rooms at all of these hotels where you can leave luggage not required while on trek. There is also a security safe at these hotels for storage of valuables.



A TYPICAL DAY ON TREK

The day starts with an early morning mug of tea or coffee brought to your tent by one of the cook's helpers. Before heading over to the mess tent for breakfast it is best to pack your overnight gear into your duffel bag. During breakfast the tents will be packed away and, after the porters have arranged their loads, they will set off on the trail in the cool of the morning.

After breakfast, probably between 7am and 8am, we start walking. The pace of the trek is leisurely with plenty of time to enjoy the scenery, take photos and explore the local villages. Lunch will be around 11am at a spot by the side of the trail and is prepared for us by the cooks.

There is more walking after lunch and normally you will get into camp by mid afternoon with the tents already put up by the local staff. In the evening a three course meal is served in the mess tent around 7pm. After supper the western leader will discuss the plan for the next day with the group. People might stay in the mess tent chatting about the day's events for a while before retiring to their tent for the night.

FOOD

In Kathmandu there is a wide range of excellent restaurants, please read our Nepal Pre Trip information document for our recommendations. Breakfast is provided each morning by the hotel.

While on the trek, the cook will provide good quality food in sufficient quantities. For breakfast you are likely to get porridge or cereal, toast or chapattis, omelettes and a range of hot drinks. For our camping treks in Nepal we provide fresh coffee from our Bialetti Moka coffee machine. On arrival to camp in the afternoon you will be given tea and biscuits and a three course meal will follow later in the evening.

CLIMATE

The traditional trekking season in Nepal is late September to May, with October and November generally recognised as having the best weather. Spring is also a

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popular time of year with warmer weather and the advantage of seeing spring flowers and rhododendrons in bloom.

This trek will have a wide range of temperatures depending on the altitude and the time of day. In the mountains between 1,000m and 3,500m the nights will be cool, normally around 5°C, and during the day temperatures sometimes rise to 25°C. At higher altitudes temperatures range from about 15°C to -20°C.

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

A list of clothing and equipment for the Kanchenjunga Circuit trek has been included in the Appendix below. It is worth pointing out that you will need a sleeping bag for this trip.

If you do not have the clothing and equipment contained in this list then a good option might be to rent from the UK. Trek Hire and Expedition Kit Hire rent out high quality items at competitive prices which would save you the expense of buying. The links to their websites are at <http://www.trekhireuk.com/> and <http://www.expeditionkithire.co.uk>

Alternatively if you are going to buy then please contact the office for the Cotswold Outdoor promo code that entitles you, as a client of The Mountain Company, to a 15% discount in their stores and online.

Each trekker should bring one backpack for items required during the day. Your day backpack will contain items such as warm clothes, jacket, camera, water bottles, personal first aid kit and snacks.

The rest of your personal equipment packed in a duffel bag or backpack will be carried by a porter. **The maximum weight allowance for portage of your main bag is 15kg.** Please ensure that your bag is marked clearly on the outside for easy identification.



VISA REQUIREMENTS

All foreigners require a visa for entry into Nepal. It is your responsibility to obtain the entry visa. You can get from a Nepalese embassy overseas or on arrival in Nepal. Most people will obtain their visa on arrival to Kathmandu airport. Please read our Nepal Pre Trip information document for more details about getting your Nepal visa.

VACCINATIONS AND MEDICAL

You should obtain professional advice from a travel clinic or your local GP about which vaccinations to have before you arrive in Nepal. A dental check-up is a good idea as there will be no dental facilities while on the trek.

We bring a comprehensive first aid kit including high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines. Please get in contact with us if you would like to see the list of medicines contained in our medical kits.

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

The Mountain Company does not book international flights for our holidays. Instead all package prices are Land Only with services starting from arrival to the destination country.

If you would like help arranging flights then we suggest you contact our partner travel agent, StudentUniverse (ATOL registered) a specialist division of the Flight Centre Travel Group ---> [Get an online quote](#)

INTERNAL FLIGHTS IN NEPAL

British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (“FCO”) travel advice to Nepal states that “STOL airstrips in Nepal are among the most remote and difficult to land on in the world and are a challenge for even the most technically proficient pilots and well-maintained aircraft.” For their latest advice please take a look at their Safety & Security section under Air Travel, link at:



<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/nepal/safety-and-security>

There have been a number of recent air accidents in Nepal and in December 2013 The European Union banned all airlines based in Nepal from flying in the 28-nation bloc under the latest changes to a list of unsafe carriers. For more information on Nepal's air safety profile take a look at Aviation Safety Network, link at:

<http://aviation-safety.net/database/country/country.php?id=9N>

INSURANCE

Travel insurance for any Mountain Company itinerary is a condition of booking a holiday. At the very least you should have emergency medical and repatriation insurance which must include the cost of mountain rescue. Cancellation insurance is strongly recommended as all deposits paid to The Mountain Company are non-refundable.

Please carefully check your insurers' Terms and Conditions in particular you should make sure the following is covered: 1) Activity (i.e touring, trekking or mountaineering) 2) Maximum altitude reached on trek 3) Helicopter evacuation in an emergency.

It is important for you to understand that ultimately the burden of any expense incurred in evacuation and repatriation procedures will be borne by you and that it is your responsibility to pay any costs incurred in respect of any evacuation or for medical treatment. You should be fully aware of the implications involved in arranging your own travel insurance and understand the limitations and exclusions of your policy.

You should be aware that under certain circumstances, The Mountain Company leader (or our local agent, if no western leader) might instigate rescue proceedings via helicopter (or any other means necessary) in situations of medical emergency without first contacting your insurance company for their approval.

The Mountain Company has arranged travel and trekking insurance for European Union residents with the specialist insurance broker **Campbell Irvine**. Their insurance policy will cover you for most of the trips in our portfolio. However if your



trek is classified or graded by The Mountain Company as “**Strenuous**” or “**Challenging**” then you must make sure you select this option when obtaining an online quote for your insurance. Campbell Irvine will not provide insurance cover for any trips classified as “**Mountaineering**”.

CAMPBELL IRVINE DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE

To apply for an online quote through [Campbell Irvine's Direct Travel Insurance](#) website. Should you have any questions regarding the terms and conditions of cover please contact Campbell Irvine on 0207 938 1734 or email info@campbellirvine.com

We have [listed on TMC website a comprehensive list of specialist adventure travel insurers](#) that our trekkers from UK, EU and Internationally based have used in the past. Please carefully check their Terms & Conditions prior to purchase. These companies are not necessarily recommended by us so it is your responsibility to ensure you have appropriate coverage.

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

For those of you who are visiting Nepal for the first time we have provided some cultural information to help you fit in and feel at ease:

-) The dress code is important for both men and women. Men and women should wear trousers rather than shorts while trekking.
-) There are many hot springs, rivers and lakes where it is pleasant to take a dip, it is fine for men to go bare-chested while bathing but they should not go nude. Women should try and be as modest as possible in these situations.
-) Hindus are concerned about the ritual pollution of food when it is touched by someone outside their caste or religion. Therefore, do not touch any cooked foods on display and when drinking from a container used by others avoid



touching your lips to it. Do not eat food with your left hand and make sure you only give or receive food with your right hand.

-) Shoes are considered degrading so keep them on the ground and remove them before putting your feet on anything. If you enter a Nepali house follow the example of your host in deciding whether to remove your shoes but on entering a temple or monastery you should definitely remove them.
-) You will pass Buddhist mani walls, chortens, and stupas along the trek and to follow local traditions you should pass them on your right.
-) When visiting a monastery or gompa it is customary to give a donation for its upkeep.

SUGGESTED READING

Kanchenjunga the Untrodden Peak by Charles Evans.

The Hard Years by Joe Brown

The Kanchenjunga Adventure by Frank Smythe

Round Kanchenjunga by Douglas Freshfield

Living on the Edge: The Winter Ascent of Kanchenjunga by Cherie Bremer-Kamp

Kanchenjunga; First Ascent from the North-East Spur by Col Narinder Kumar

Kangchenjunga Himal and Kumbhakana by Jan Kielkowski

The Ascent of Rum Doodle by WE Bowman

Nepali Phrasebook by Lonely Planet

Altitude and acclimatisation information and advice

Going higher Oxygen, man and mountains by Charles Houston, MD

The High Altitude Medicine Handbook by Pollard and Murdugh

Medicine for mountaineering by James Wilkerson, MD

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MAPS

Kanchenjunga by Himalayan Maphouse Trekking Maps of Nepal scale: 1:100,000
This map will be included in your welcome pack when you arrive in Nepal.

Nepal Trekking Map Himalayan Maphouse Scale: 1:900,000



APPENDIX

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT LIST FOR KANCHENJUNGA CIRCUIT

For the safety of everyone in the group and to help ensure a successful trek, you are required to have the following items in our clothing and equipment list tailored for Kanchenjunga Circuit trek. Your gear will be checked by the group leader in Kathmandu prior to departure for the trek.

As a reminder, the weather on this trek will vary season to season and day to day as you ascend to higher elevations. During the first couple of days on Kanchenjunga Circuit trek you will experience hot and humid conditions with temperatures around 25°C. You will experience the coldest temperatures at Lhonak an altitude of 4,785m where overnight lows will be down to around -15°C

Footwear:

-) Walking boots. A pair of water repellent boots with ankle support.
-) Walking socks.
-) Trail shoes. Can be used around camp and as a replacement if your walking boots fall apart!
-) Sandals: fully enclosed sandals are best to protect your feet if required during river crossings.

Trekking gear for crossing the passes:

-) Two trekking poles (Black Diamond poles with “Flick Lock” are best). Having two poles is mandatory as required for your safety on steep and loose sections of the trail and for walking through deep snow higher up.
-) Kahtoola Microspikes or YakTrax XTRs. These are for your safety and security when descending passes if snowy or icy conditions, for more information please take a look at: <https://kahtoola.com/product/microspikes/> and <https://www.yaktrax.com/product/xtr>



) Gaiters. A pair of knee high gaiters used to keep boots dry if walking through deep snow or on wet ground.

Clothing:

) Waterproof jacket and trousers (goretex or similar). For use if it rains or snows during the trek.

) Trekking trousers. Minimum two pairs of trousers.

) Long sleeved shirts (not cotton). Minimum two shirts.

) Micro fleece.

) Mid to heavyweight fleece.

) Sleeveless/ gilet or body warmer type fleece. This will help keep your core warm while not bulking when layering up. Gilet fleece can be used in combination with base layers, other fleeces and down jacket to provide maximum warmth and insulation.

) Thermals or base layer for top & bottom (merino wool or synthetic).

) Fleece pants. To be worn around camp or added as an additional layer when the temperatures start to drop higher up.

) Medium weight down jacket (eg. The North Face Nuptse jacket 700 fill)

Handwear:

) Fleece gloves.

) Warms mittens and/or gloves.

Headwear:

) Wool or fleece hat.

) Sun hat.

) Bandana or scarf (eg. Buff Headwear check out <http://www.buffwear.com>).

) Headtorch. Bring extra batteries.



-) Sunglasses. The lenses need to be Category 4 rated and should have side protection or wraparound design to prevent light getting through to your eyes that could cause sun blindness.

Personal Equipment:

-) Sleeping bag. Maximum overnight lows will be around -15 Celsius.
-) Fleece or silk liner for your sleeping bag. A liner protects your sleeping bag from getting dirty and helps by adding extra insulation to keep you warm at night.
-) Sleeping mat (eg. Thermarest). On trek we provide everyone with one foam mat however we recommend two layers for maximum insulation and comfort.
-) Daypack. Recommended size is 30 litres or larger as you need to have enough space to carry water bottles, camera, snacks and extra clothing as well as micro crampons and down jacket etc for days crossing the high passes. It is also a good idea to bring a rain cover to keep the contents dry.
-) Stuff sacks for keeping your gear dry and organised. Or even better are fold-drybags such as from Exped.
-) Two water bottles. Nalgene wide mouth bottles are the best.
-) Pee bottle. Highly recommended as means you do not have to get up to find toilet tent at night. For men you can use an old water bottle for women take a look at SheWee at <http://www.shewee.com/>
-) Sunscreen and lipsalve with a high SPF.
-) Insect repellent.
-) Water purification tablets (Pristine, Biox Acqua or Acqa Mira). You will be provided with boiled water at camp however if you refill water bottle at a water tap or steam during the day you should use water purifiers.
-) Favourite snack food.
-) Books, ipod and cards etc.
-) Camera with spare batteries and memory cards.



-) Insurance certificate.
-) Earplugs (optional).
-) Baby wipes (optional).
-) Hand sanitizer. We suggest you keep this in your day pack for use after a toilet break during the trek or before eating any snacks.

Travelling:

-) Duffle bag or large backpack for your personal gear on the trek (carried by a porter). Bring a small combination padlock to secure the bag.
-) Travel clothes. You will need casual clothing for air travel days and time spent in Kathmandu.
-) Toiletry bag include toilet paper, soap, towel, toothbrush, etc. We provide toilet paper so you do not need to bring this with you.

Personal first aid kit:

Note: we provide a comprehensive group first aid kit but please bring personal medications and other items you might use regularly such as:

-) Any personal medications.
-) Blister treatment (Compeed patches are the best).
-) Rehydration powder eg Dioralyte.
-) Analgesics (paracetamol, ibuprofen and aspirin).
-) Plasters and zinc oxide tape.
-) Throat lozenges.
-) Diamox (helps with acclimatisation).
-) Antibiotics. Although we carry antibiotics for the team, it is advisable to bring some of your own. We recommend that you visit your doctor and request one set of antibiotics to treat stomach infection and one for upper respiratory tract infection.