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Upper Dolpo Trek

URL: <https://nepalbasecamptreks.com/trip/upper-dolpo-trek/>

Trip Code

NBT 054

Destination

Nepal

Activity

Treks

Start / End Point

Nepalgunj / Nepalgunj

Duration

25

Per Person From

USD 3,200

Region

Wilderness Region Trekking

Max. Altitude

5220m

Nature Of Trek

Tea House to Camping

Best Season

March, May, October, December

Activity Per Day

4-6HRS

Transportation

Domestic Flight

Challenging

Our “Challenging” trips are ideal for experienced trekkers and adventurers in good physical shape, featuring challenging terrain, long hikes, significant elevation, and remote locations. Wilderness skills are beneficial.

Trip Highlights

Venture into one of Nepal’s most remote Himalayan regions on the Upper Dolpo Trek, where pristine alpine lakes, ancient monasteries, dramatic mountain passes, and centuries-old traditions create an extraordinary adventure. This remarkable journey offers a rare opportunity to experience authentic Himalayan culture while exploring some of Nepal’s most untouched wilderness areas.

Upper Dolpo Trek / Special Trekking Routes

- The Upper Dolpo Trek is one of Nepal's least explored trekking destinations. The region witnessed not even 1000 people in the year. Hence, this trek will provide you with the solitude you are seeking from the trek.
- Explore Shey-Phoksundo National Park, the largest national park in Nepal. The park is home to plants like rhododendrons, salix, blue pine, hemlock, and cedar and rare animals like snow leopards, Himalayan tahr, and Himalayan black bears. According to a survey conducted from 2019 to 2022, the park has 90 snow leopards.
Among many natural wonders, the Upper Dolpo trek includes visiting Phoksundo Lake in Shey Phoksundo National Park. It is one of the major oligotrophic lakes in Nepal.
- Trekking in the Upper Dolpo takes you to western Nepal and offers you an opportunity for cultural exploration. The people of the Upper Dolpo follow Bon and Tibetan Buddhism. You can interact with locals and understand their culture.
- You will have an opportunity to explore some of Nepal's ancient monasteries. Among them is Shey Gumpa, which is believed to have been built in the 11th century. With Crystal Mountain as its backdrop, Shey Gumpa is a visual delight.
- The Upper Dolpo trek offers the opportunity to travel through some of the highest passes in the world, including Kang La Pass (5,306 m) and Sela La Pass (5,094 m).
- Upper Dolpo Trek offers a panoramic view of the Dhaulagiri range, Kanjiroba, and Annapurna.
- Since the Upper Dolpo trek is a camping trek, trekking here offers a chance for nomadic-style trekking.

Why Choose the Upper Dolpo Trek?

The Upper Dolpo Trek offers a unique combination of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and remote mountain exploration. Unlike more frequented trekking regions, Dolpo remains largely untouched, allowing travellers to experience authentic village life, ancient Buddhist traditions, and spectacular Himalayan scenery in a peaceful setting.

From the turquoise waters of Phoksundo Lake to the sacred monasteries scattered throughout the region, every day reveals something extraordinary. Whether you choose the challenging Upper Dolpo Trek or the culturally rich Lower Dolpo Trek, the journey provides unforgettable encounters with local communities, historic trade routes, and some of Nepal's most remarkable mountain environments.

Trip Overview

The **Upper Dolpo trek** is one of Nepal's most remote and adventurous trekking destinations. It is located in the Karnali Province of the northwestern part of Nepal inside the Shey Phoksundo National Park. It is one of the driest regions of Nepal, as it lies in the rain shadow areas, surrounded by the Dhaulagiri mountain range. Besides, it shares its borders with Tibet. So, Tibetan Buddhism has a massive influence on the region. Due to its historical and cultural richness, it is a restricted trekking area. Hence, you will be required to obtain a special permit to trek in the Upper Dolpo. Also, you will need to trek with a guide if you want to trek in this region.

The trek involves long and strenuous walking through various high passes above 5,000 meters, including Nangdalo-La Pass (5,345 m), Sela La Pass (5,094 m), and Jeng-La Pass (5,090 m). Due to the remoteness of the area, there are no tea houses available during the Upper Dolpo trek. Hence, you must rely on camping as your accommodation option. Since the Upper Dolpo trek is a demanding journey through rough terrain, you will need to be properly fit and have previous trekking experience. Depending upon the routes and itinerary, the trek takes anywhere from 20 to 30 days to complete. In this 25-day Upper Dolpo Trek Guide, we will provide you with a detailed itinerary along with the best times, difficulty level, and preparation tips.

25 Days Upper Dolpo Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu and transfer to hotel.

Our Nepal Base Camp Trek staff member will receive you at the Tribhuvan International Airport Kathmandu upon arrival. They will then drive you to the hotel of your choice. After refreshing, you will meet your trekking guide, who will inform you about Upper Dolpo's itinerary and costs. They will thoroughly review the plans, safety measures, foods, and accommodations. This is the day you will do the necessary shopping and packing for the trek. If required, our guide will assist you in the shopping.

Highest Altitude:

1,327 m

Accommodations:

Hotels

Day 2: Fly to Nepalgunj

On your second day, you will fly from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj. But before you embark on your upper Dolpo trekking journey, you will first need to check all the necessary gear and equipment to ensure you haven't left out any. Also, ensure you are within the weight limit to avoid extra expenditure.

After an hour-long flight, you will land in Nepalgunj, a western region of Nepal that shares its border with India. The guide will take you to the three-star hotel or lodge at the Nepalgunj airport. *During your free time, you can explore the city, either alone or with the staff. Mahendra Park, a mini-zoo, and Bageshwori Temple are some places to visit in Nepalgunj.*

Highest Altitude:

150 m

Accommodations:

Hotel

Day 3: Fly to Jhupal then drive to Dunai

In the early mornings, you will have breakfast at your hotel in Nepalgunj. Then, you will catch a short flight to Jhupal, where the trek begins. You have two options here: trek or drive to Dunai. Our itinerary includes driving so you can rest properly before the trek begins. Dunai is the village on the bank of the Thuli Bheri River. It is also the administrative center of Dolpa district. After checking in the lodges, you can explore the Dunai village.

Trek Duration

2 Hours

Highest Altitude:

2,475 m

Accommodations:

Lodges or Teahouses

Day 4: Trek to Chhepka

You will start trekking on the 4th day of your journey after an overnight stay at Dunai. On this day, you will trek along the Thulo Bheri River to reach the Sulighat, which is the starting point of the Shey-Phoksundo National Park. Here, you will present your permits. Later, you will follow the trails along the Phoksundo River. You will cross Rahagaon and Shyanta to reach the Chhepka. On this day, you will gain an elevation of about 700 meters.

Trek Duration

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

2,838 m

Accommodations:

Camping

Day 5: Trek to Samdua village

On this day, you will traverse through the trails of the lower Dolpo trek following the Phoksundo River. After a short climb, you will reach the riverbank and descend through the forested areas. You will cross a small bridge at Ryajik village. You will then proceed further to Samdua for an overnight stop.

Trek Duration

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

2,960m

Day 6: Trek to Phoksumdo Lake

Today, you will trek toward the Shey Phoksundo Lake (3,589 m), the deepest lake in Nepal. You will also reach the starting point of the Phoksundo River. You will walk through the cedar forest to reach the

Palam, the winter settlement of villagers in Ringmo. Ringmo is the village near Phoksundo Lake, with flat-roofed stone houses. There are a lot of mud-plastered Chortens and Mani walls in the village. Our staff will settle down at the shores of the lake to build a camp.

Trek Duration

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

3,630 m

Day 7: Acclimation at Phoksundo Lake and Rest day for local excursion

Phoksundo Lake and the surrounding areas are not enough to explore in one single day. So, a rest day at Phoksundo Lake serves two purposes. It allows you to explore the lake and the Ringmo village further. The risk of altitude sickness above the lake significantly increases as the oxygen level starts to thin out from here. So, your body needs acclimatization before embarking on a further trek.

Highest Altitude:

3,750 m

Day 8: Trek to Phoksundo Khola Camp

The Upper Dolpo route begins from the Phoksundo Lake on your eighth trek day. Leaving the Phoksundo Lake at an elevation of 3,600 meters, you will head towards Phoksundo Khola Camp at 3,750 meters. The trail follows the rocky ledge above the riverbank. Continuing westward, you will traverse along pasturelands that gradually open into the vast plains of Phoksundo Khola Camp.

Trek Duration

5 Hours

Highest Altitude:

3,750 m

Day 9: Trek to Phuksundo Bhanjyang

On this day, you will cross the glacial valley and head towards the north. The trails become narrower and narrower, taking you through vertical cliffs and crooked rock formations. The trek becomes challenging with a steep ascent towards the Low Camp of Kang La Pass. You will settle around the Phoksundo Bhanjyang on this day. The panoramic views of the distant mountains and Kang La Pass are the major highlights of this day.

Trek Duration

4 Hours

Highest Altitude:

4,717 m

Day 10: Cross Nangdalo -La 5,350 m and trek to Shey Gompa

On this day, you will cross one Kang La Pass or Nangdalo-La Pass (5,350 m). The high mountain pass will take you to the Shey Gompa, also known as the Crystal Monastery. The crystal mountain near the Shey Gompa is the major highlight of today, in addition to the Nangdalo-La Pass. Today is the toughest day of the trek, as you will be continuously ascending and descending the rugged terrain.

Trek Duration

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

5,350 m

Day 11: Rest day at Shey Gompa the crystal monastery.

A perfect place for rest day in this high mountain area, in the harmony of nature and chanting of monks, visit Shey Monastery also known Crystal Monastery, this area is well described in the novel Snow Leopard by Peter Matthiessen.

Day 12: Trek to Namgung 4,608 m via Sela (Gela) La 5,094m

From this wonderful place, our journey continuous into a wall canyon, trail meanders atop Sela or Gela-la at 5,094 m offering great views of landscapes and of Mt. Dhaulagiri peaks, downhill on the grazing area with pleasant walk to Namgung Gaon for overnight stop.

Highest Altitude:

5,094m.

Day 13: Trek to Saldang

After a stop in this village walk on dusty windswept terrain, leading to steep uphill to reach our overnight camp at Saldang, another impressive large village of the region, situated higher side of the plateau.

Trek Duration

5 Hours

Highest Altitude:

3,770 m

Day 14: Trek to Chagaon

From here, morning walk following river Nang chu all the way with short ups and down and then passing Sugugaon and Dechen Lapran a cattle herders settlement, and then heading to our overnight camp at Chagoan village with an old Rapa Gompa of pre Buddhist and ancient Bon-Pa culture.

Trek Duration

5 Hours

Highest Altitude:

4,910 m

Day Day 15: Trek to Dachu Khola camp

Morning walk south towards Tarap valley around Tokyu and Dho Tarap village, then taking southern direction to reach Dachu Khola and beyond, after crossing the same trail following river through farm fields, and then walk into Yak herder areas for overnight camp.

Trek Duration

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

4,700 m

Day 16: Trek and cross Jyanta-La at 5,220 m and walk to Phedi 4,900 m**Trek Duration**

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

5,220 m

Day 17: Trek to Tokyu Gaon 4,209 m via Jeng la 5,090m

After a steep climb an easy walk today for hours reaching at Tokyu gaon for overnight, this is one of the most impressive and interesting village of Dolpo area, consist of more than ten villages and nice tended farm fields with an old monasteries.

Trek Duration

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

5,090m

Day 18: Trek to Dho Tarap

After Tokyugaon, morning starts with downhill walk towards Tarap Chu on broader green valley, this is one of the scenic wide valleys with lots of Sheppard's settlements of Yaks and Sheep, and walk continues to our overnight camp at Dho Tarap, this is another interesting village with mix tribes of Tibetans origin and Magar hill tribe people.

Trek Duration

5 Hours

Highest Altitude:

3944

Day 19: Trek to Ghyamgar

From here a long descend to Tarap valley, one of the largest and longest valley of Dolpo area which is about 20 k.m. which stretches following Tarap Chu River most of the way to joins with Thuli Bheri River near Tarakot village, walk leads past Langa with beautiful cascading waterfalls heading due south following the trail after Sisaul and small place of Kesila around Yak herders temporary camps to reach our overnight camp at Ghyamgar.

Trek Duration

7 Hours

Highest Altitude:

3,759 m

Day 20: Trek to Tarap Khola 3,652 via Chhyugar 3,440 m

Today walks on Tarap nice valley, as the trail enter into a narrow gorge with some vegetation of bushes of juniper and wild rose, walk leads past Toltol with a large overhanging cave, around this area might see some wild life like Naur or Blue Sheep and other animals.

As the walk progress reaching a confluence of River Tarap Chu and Lang Khola, overnight camp by the river after a long day walk of about 6 hours.

Trek Duration

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

3,652m

Day 21: Trek to Tarakot

Start morning walk passing smaller villages and then into a small wooded area, following river all the way at Tarakot, a large and interesting village with old history and well maintained terraced farm fields, Tarakot with an old historical fortress (Dzong or Kot) guarding the village.

Tarakot village houses famous old Sandul Gomba located at junction of Barbung Khola and Tarap Chu River where the overnight camp is placed.

Trek Duration

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

2,540 m

Day 22: Trek to Dunai - 05 hrs then drive to Jhupal - 02 hr jeep ride.

After a great time at Tarakot, our last day walk leads to Dunai for short while and then taking a short drive to Jhupal for the flight back to Kathmandu.

Morning starts following many spread out villages and farmers huts, walking on wider trail with some short uphill and downhill towards Thuli Bheri River valley to reach at Dunai, on reaching Dunai time permitting having lunch. From here jeeps drive to Jhupal to catch our next morning flight to Nepalgunj.

Trek Duration

7 Hours

Day 23: Fly back to Kathmandu via Nepalgunj.

Morning as per the flight time to Nepalgunj transfer to Jhupal airstrip after bidding farewell to our camping staff and porters, a short scenic flight brings you south at Nepalgunj for short transit stop and then fly back to Kathmandu with panorama views of mountains during airborne and then on reaching at Kathmandu domestic airport transfer back to your hotels with afternoon free at leisure.

Day 24: In Kathmandu free day with optional sightseeing tour.

Nepal Base Camp Trek reserves this day as contingency or free day in case of flight delay and cancellation in Jhupal, Dolpo which can occur sometimes due bad and unfavorable weather conditions which is beyond our control.

If all goes well using this spare day for optional tour at places of interest around old heritage sites of Kathmandu-Patan or Bhaktapur, with rest of the day free for individual activities and shopping souvenirs.

Day 25: Final International departure homeward bound.

Last day in amazing Nepal with awesome adventure around Upper Dolpo & Crystal Monastery trekking, our staff will transfer you to Kathmandu international airport for your final flight back homeward bound or to respective countries.

Trip Includes

- Airport pickups and drops in a private vehicle
- 3-star hotel accommodation in Kathmandu
- Accommodation during the Upper Dolpo Trek
- All meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) during the trek
- Welcome and farewell dinners

- All ground transportation on a comfortable private vehicle as per the itinerary
- Domestic flights (Kathmandu- Nepalgunj- Jhupal)
- An experienced, English-speaking, and government-licensed trekking guide.
- Porters and kitchen staff
- Staff costs, including their salary, insurance, equipment, domestic airfare, food, and accommodation
- All necessary paperwork and trekking permits (National Park Permit, TIMS)
- Medical kit (carried by guides)
- All government taxes and tourist service charges

Trip Excludes

- Meals in Kathmandu before and after the Upper Dolpo trek
- Travel Insurance
- Visa fees
- Tips for trekking guides, porters, and kitchen staff
- Any extra drinks during the trek
- Personal gear, equipment, and accessories

Group Discounts Available

No. of Persons	Price per Person
1+	USD 3,200

Trip Information

History of Upper Dolpo

The Dolpo region was ruled by many Tibetan dynasties, like the **Kingdom of Purang** and the **Kingdom of Guge**, in the **8th and 9th centuries**. During this period, the people from Tibet also migrated towards Dolpo, bringing the culture and tradition along. Shey and Yangzer Gompa are some of the monasteries built in those periods. Somewhere in the later century, Dolpo became an independent kingdom. However, its neighboring kingdoms, Lo Manthang and Jumla, ruled over Dolpo in different timeframes. *Lo Manthang and Dolpo were annexed to Nepal during the unification in 1789.*

Upper Dolpo was secluded for an extended period, and only a few foreigners knew about it. It changed when an American naturalist and author, Peter Matthiessen, visited Upper Dolpo in 1973, searching for the Snow Leopard. In 1978, he published the book "The Snow Leopard," which caught the attention of foreigners. *Later, in 1989, the government of Nepal opened trekking in the Upper Dolpo region for foreign trekkers, resulting in the flow of people in the area.* The place got more fame from Eric Valli's

Oscar-nominated film Himalaya (also known as Caravan), which was shot in the Dolpo region. Another Nepali movie, Shambhala, directed by Min Bahadur Bham, was based on the Polyandry tradition and was shot in the Upper Dolpo region.

Accommodation for Upper Dolpo Trek

Since Upper Dolpo is located in a remote area of Nepal, only limited accommodation facilities are available. Unlike other popular treks, it doesn't have well-established teahouses along the route. There are few teahouses in the lower regions, like Shey-Phoksundo Lake, above which teahouses are rare. So, camping is the most popular accommodation option on this long trek. Nepal Base Camp Trek will provide porters and kitchen staff.

Your tents will consist of a thick down-filled mattress for extra warmth. Besides, there will be a dining tent with portable chairs and tables. The kitchen tent is where the cook prepares your fresh meals. A toilet tent will also be built as natural toilets are scarce in high-altitude areas. Amenities like electricity and internet are very rare in the Upper Dolpo Trek. You can carry mini solar panels to harness the electricity.

Note: Your accommodations in Kathmandu and Nepalgunj will be at a hotel.

Meals

During the Upper Dolpo trek, you can expect traditional Nepali dishes, local cuisine, and a few international delicacies. You will get three meals a day: breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Your lunch and dinner will be similar, consisting of dal, bhat, and tarkari (lentil soup, rice, and curry). Other options include canned items, which will take less time to prepare. Porridge, chapatis, and eggs are some of the breakfast options. However, since you will be traveling for 25 days, we advise against taking raw items with a high chance of rotting. Black tea, butter tea, and black coffee are the drinks available in the trek. We strongly advise you against drinking alcohol items on the trek.

Trekking in the upper Dolpo involves carrying kitchen items and tents. You must stop at some point to set up the kitchen tents, which is time-consuming. Hence, you have to pre-plan all your meals. To deal with hunger while trekking, it is better to carry dried fruits, dried meats, energy bars, and protein bars. Water was also a major issue during the trek. Streams and rivers are the major sources of water, so carrying water purification tablets with you is better.

Physical Condition & Experience Requirements

16 days Everest Base Camp Trek is a moderate for those travelers who can walk up to 6-7 hours (10-15km) a day on an uphill and downhill trail will find this trek fulfilling. It is best that we prepare ourselves for the Everest trek by morning jogging and 1 hour exercising regularly at least a month prior to the start of the Upper Dolpo trek. Trekking to the Everest Base Camp should be relatively easier for those who have experience walking/trekking in a high altitude environment. Past hiking experience would be an asset but no technical skill is required for this trip. It is also important that we consult our doctor. Participants with pre-existing medical conditions such as heart, lung, and blood diseases should inform Himalayan Glacier before booking the trek.

Best Time to Travel to Everest Base Camp Trek

The best time for the Upper Dolpo trek is Spring (March to May) and Autumn (September to November). The temperatures during these two seasons are mild, ranging from 5°C to 15°C in the daytime and -5°C to -10°C in the nighttime. Besides the mild temperature, the weather is also stable with clear visibility. The spring offers the kaleidoscope landscape of rhododendrons in the lower region and wildflowers in the upper region. The autumn, however, provides the vintage touch with the golden-brown hills.

If it were any other trekking destination, Summer/Monsoon (June to August) would have been the off-season for trekking. However, since Upper Dolpo lies in the rain shadow region, it receives minimal rainfall even in the monsoon season. However, getting flights to Jhupal and back to Kathmandu during monsoon season can be challenging. Besides, the daytime temperature in the lower region gets extremely high, making it uncomfortable to trek. In contrast, winter is off-season for the Upper Dolpo trek because of freezing temperatures in the passes. The temperatures can reach up to -20°C during nighttime. Also, it is during winter that Upper Dolpo receives massive snowfall. Since camping is the accommodation option, it becomes extremely difficult to maintain proper sleep, even with the proper bedding.

Season	Daytime Temperature	Nighttime Temperature	Notes
Spring (Mar-May)	5°C to 15°C	-5°C to -10°C	Pleasant for trekking, with clear skies.
Summer/Monsoon (Jun-Aug)	10°C to 20°C	0°C to 5°C	Dry due to rain shadow effect.
Autumn (Sep-Nov)	5°C to 15°C	-5°C to -10°C	Stable weather, best trekking season.
Winter (Dec-Feb)	-5°C to 5°C	-15°C to -20°C	Extremely cold, heavy snowfall.

Upper Dolpo Trek Difficulty

The upper Dolpo trek is considered a challenging trek due to its remotest location, lack of facilities, and high altitudes. The trek requires excellent physical and mental fitness along with prior trekking experience. Now let us look at the key factors that make this trek demanding;

Trek Duration

The upper Dolpo trek is one of the longest treks in Nepal, requiring you to travel for 25 days. You will traverse the rugged terrain and harsh trekking trails for 6 to 7 hours daily. The extended trekking duration with long walking hours makes this trek physically and mentally exhausting.

Altitude Sickness

The Upper Dolpo trek involves crossing high mountain passes over 4,000 m, like Kang La Pass (5,306 m). The thinning oxygen level at such an altitude poses the risk of altitude sickness, so you must acclimatize properly to adjust to the harsh atmosphere.

Remoteness of Trek

Trekking in the Upper Dolpo means trekking in the remotest part of Nepal. So, there are no proper emergency facilities for most of the trek. There are no internet or phone networks in the area. Hence, you must rely on guides and satellite phones for communication.

Terrain and Trail Conditions

The terrains of the Dolpo and the trails are rocky and uneven. It has no definite path in some sections and requires crossing the landslide-prone areas. Besides, the steep ascents and descents are physically demanding.

Extreme Weather Conditions

Upper Dolpo experiences varied weather conditions at different altitudes. While the lower regions are warmer, the upper region receives snowfall. Depending on the season. The temperature can vary significantly, ranging from -20°C to 22°C. Besides, the weather conditions in the upper elevations are unpredictable. So, you have to be prepared for any unforeseen changes in the weather.

Upper Dolpo Trek Preparation

The Upper Dolpo trek is one of the most challenging treks in Nepal. Proper preparation is mandatory to avoid any hassle during the trek. Preparation ensures safety, physical endurance, and logistical readiness. Now, let's see what you can do to prepare for your Upper Dolpo Trek.

Physical Preparation

The upper Dolpo trek is long and strenuous, requiring 6 to 8 hours daily. Walking for hours in terrains that take you above 5,000 m is physically taxing. The trekking trails are rugged and might cause injuries. Hence, it is important to start preparing at least a month before the trek. You should focus on cardiovascular exercise, strength training, and flexibility exercises.

Mental Preparation

Being away from home in an area with minimal facilities is stressful. The Upper Dolpo trek is exactly that. So, you must be mentally prepared for camping, basic foods, and lack of instant medical attention. You should be prepared to tackle the unpredictable weather change, altitude sickness, and long trekking hours. You can prepare mentally by practicing meditation or going on short treks that simulate the trekking conditions.

Acclimatization and Altitude Sickness Prevention

You will be at risk of altitude sickness as you cross the Shey Gumpa. Hence, you must abide by the

trekking rules of “climb high, sleep low.” Besides, you must take a few days to acclimate before crossing Kang La Pass to adjust to the thinning oxygen level. You should also carry medications like Diamox to help with altitude sickness.

Hire a Trekking Agency

Hiring a trekking agency is the most integral part of Upper Dolpo Trek. Unlike other treks, you cannot trek alone in the Upper Dolpo as it is a restricted region. You need to be assisted by a guide to do so. You also need a trekking agency to apply for a restricted area permit. A trekking agency will provide you with a trekking guide, porter, and kitchen staff. Not only that, but they will also help you customize the itinerary.

Upper Dolpo Trek Packing List

Before deciding on the Upper Dolpo Packing list, you must understand two important things: a) the weather conditions here are varied, and b) you will rely on camping for accommodations. Hence, your packing list must fit these two conditions. Let us look at some of the most important items that you shouldn't compromise on;

- Moisture-wicking thermal base layer
- Mid-layers like fleece jackets and pants
- Insulated outer layers like Down Jacket
- Trekking Boots
- Head wears like hats, buff or neck gaiter
- Handwears like gloves
- Trekking poles
- Duffle Bag and a day pack
- Sun protection
- Sleeping bag (rated -20 degrees Celsius)
- Travel documents and permits
- Safety and first-aid kits
- Personal hygiene and toiletries

Note- We will provide camping tents, bedding, and the kitchen staff.

Permits for Upper Dolpo Trek

Upper Dolpo is a restricted area for trekking. Meaning that the government of Nepal strictly controls trekking in the region. It is a restricted area because of its vast cultural history with Tibet. Also, it shares its borders with Tibet, which makes it mandatory for the Nepal government to monitor tourism in the area to avoid any political controversies in the future. Besides, it belongs inside the National Park, home to many endangered animals like Snow Leopard. Hence, you need two permits to trek in the region. The two permits with prices are given below;

Permit Types	Non-SAARC nationals	SAARC Nationals	Nepalese Citizen	Obtain From
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Upper-Dolpo Restricted Area Permit	• USD 500 per person (for the first 10 days) • USD 50 per day per person (after 10 days)		-	• Department of Immigration
Shey-Phoksundo National Park Permit	• NPR 1,500 per person (~USD 11)	• NPR 3,000 per person (~USD 23)	• NPR 100	• Nepal Tourism Board • Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal (TAAN) • National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) • At the entry gate of the National Park

Note: Children below 10 years old don't require a Shey-Phoksundo National Permit to trek in the Upper Dolpo.

Upper Dolpo Trek Costs

The Upper Dolpo Trek is one of the most expensive treks in Nepal, costing you anywhere from USD 3200 to USD 4,500. The major costs include the permit fees, which can go up to or beyond USD 1000 dollars for the 25-day trek. Then there are the costs of four domestic flights, guides, porters, kitchen staff, and food and camping arrangements. Excluding the flights and permits, your daily trekking expenses would be around USD 100 to USD 150. Note that these are the prices of Upper Dolpo Trek Packages. It doesn't include your shopping and meals in Kathmandu. Now, let us see what the trek packages include and what they exclude.

Tips and Safety Measures

Due to the remote location of the Upper Dolpo trek, immediate medical attention from professionals is unlikely. Additionally, the trek carries risks of injuries and altitude sickness. Hence, you must be cautious throughout the trek regarding your health and other aspects that might result in the cancellation of the trek.

Here are some tips and safety measures you can apply during your Upper Dolpo trek.

- If you are a trekker with no previous experience, either focus on preparation or gain experience before hitting the Upper Dolpo Trekking trails.
- Even with previous experience, you should focus on your fitness at least a month before the trek

starts.

- You should separate at least two days for acclimatization. This will allow your body to adjust to the harsher environment.
- Immediately talk to your guide if you notice symptoms like headaches, dizziness, and nausea while trekking.
- When planning your itinerary, be sure to check the weather conditions for the region during the specific season of your trek.
- To prevent dehydration and altitude sickness, drink at least 3 to 4 liters daily. If you drink directly from water sources, take a water purification tablet.
- Upper Dolpo trek is a camping trek. So, make sure you carry all the necessary equipment required for camping.
- We strongly advise you against drinking alcohol in the trek.

What Makes the Upper Dolpo Trek Unique?

The Upper Dolpo Trek is renowned for their remoteness, cultural significance, and extraordinary natural attractions. The region is home to Shey Phoksundo National Park, ancient Bon and Tibetan Buddhist traditions, high mountain passes, and centuries-old monasteries that continue to play an important role in local life.

A major highlight of both the Upper Dolpo Trek and Lower Dolpo Trek is the opportunity to explore landscapes that remain largely unchanged by modern development. Trekkers can discover crystal-clear lakes, traditional villages, sacred monasteries, and breathtaking mountain panoramas while experiencing one of Nepal's most authentic trekking regions.

Frequently Asked Questions

How Difficult is the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Upper Dolpo is one of the most challenging treks in Nepal. It is more challenging than the Everest Base Camp Trek and Annapurna Circuit Trek because of the remoteness of the location, rugged terrain, and the unavailability of emergency facilities.

How Much Does it Cost to Trek to Upper Dolpo?

The cost of trekking in the Upper Dolpo depends upon your personal preference. The major areas of expenditure are gear, equipment, transportation, accommodations, porters, guides, and food. An upper dolpo trek package normally starts at around USD 3200, reaching up to USD 4,500. Remember, the package doesn't include your gear and equipment costs.

What is the Highest point of Upper Dolpo Trek?

The highest point of Upper Dolpo Trek is Kang La Pass, at an altitude of 5,350 meters. The trek also includes crossing other high-altitude passes above 5,000 meters, like the Jeng La pass (5,090 meters).

What is the Upper Dolpo Trek Distance?

The total trekking distance of the Upper Dolpo Trek is over 170 km. It involves long walking, typically 6 to 8 hours daily.

Can I Trek alone in the Upper Dolpo?

No, you cannot trek alone in the Upper Dolpo region of Nepal. It is a restricted area that requires a licensed guide to assist you during the trek.

Are there any ATMs or Banking Facilities During the Upper Dolpo Trek?

No, there are no ATMs or banking facilities during the Upper Dolpo Trek. Hence, we advise you to exchange your currency in Thamel, Kathmandu, and carry the change. The smaller the change, the better.

What is the Best Time for Upper Dolpo Trek?

Autumn and Spring are the best time for the Upper Dolpo trek because of their favorable weather conditions and mild temperatures. However, trekking in the summer/monsoon season is also doable, as Upper Dolpo lies in the rain shadow areas and receives minimal rainfall even during the monsoon season. Nevertheless, trekking in such remote areas in winter is usually not recommended.

How Safe is Upper Dolpo Trek?

Upper Dolpo Trek is one of the most challenging and high-altitude treks without urgent medical attention. Hence, you must be careful throughout the trek and consult with your guide in case of emergencies. Hence, the Upper Dolpo trek is safe with proper precautions.

Can a Beginner Do Upper Dolpo Trek?

Trekking in the Upper Dolpo region of Nepal includes traversing through high-altitude passes, camping in harsher environments, and daily walking for 6 to 8 hours, which can be physically and mentally taxing. Therefore, it is not a beginner-friendly trek. So, if you are a beginner, you should first gain trekking experience or spend a significant amount of time in preparation.

Do I Need Permits for Upper Dolpo Trek?

Yes, you need two permits to undertake the Upper Dolpo trek. They are the Upper Dolpo restricted area permit and the Shey Phoksundo National Park Permit.

How do I Get to the Upper Dolpo region of Nepal?

You can get to the Upper Dolpo region after two flights from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj and then to Jhupal. From Jhupal, you need to drive to Dunai, the trek's starting point.

Is the Upper Dolpo Trek suitable for experienced trekkers only?

Yes, the Upper Dolpo Trek is best suited to experienced trekkers due to its high-altitude passes, extended duration, remote terrain, and camping requirements. Previous trekking experience and good physical fitness are highly recommended for a safe and enjoyable journey.

What is the difference between the Upper Dolpo Trek and Lower Dolpo Trek?

The Upper Dolpo Trek is longer, more remote, and involves crossing several high-altitude passes above 5,000 metres. The Lower Dolpo Trek is generally shorter and slightly less demanding while still offering beautiful scenery, cultural experiences, and access to highlights such as Phoksundo Lake and traditional Himalayan villages.

How many days are required for the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Most itineraries for the Upper Dolpo Trek range between 20 and 30 days, depending on the route, acclimatisation schedule, and exploration activities. The extended duration allows trekkers to safely cross high mountain passes and experience the region's cultural and natural attractions.

What cultural experiences can I expect during the Lower Dolpo Trek?

The Lower Dolpo Trek provides opportunities to visit traditional villages, interact with local communities, observe Tibetan Buddhist and Bon traditions, and explore ancient monasteries. These cultural experiences offer valuable insights into the history and way of life of one of Nepal's most fascinating Himalayan regions.

Is camping necessary during the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Yes, camping is an essential part of the Upper Dolpo Trek because accommodation facilities are extremely limited in the remote upper sections of the route. Camping allows trekkers to access isolated areas, high mountain passes, and cultural sites that are not connected by established teahouse networks.

Address

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