

Upper Mustang Trek

URL: <https://himalayan360.com/trip/upper-mustang-trek/>

Destination

Nepal Treks & Tours

Activity

Trekking

Start / End Point

kathmandu/kathmandu

Trip Type

Trek in Himalaya

Route

KTM-Pokhara-Jomsom-Mustang-Kagbeni-KTM 16

Duration

Destination

Mustang Region

Language

Mustang Region

Per Person From

USD 1,666

Max. Altitude

4,280m/14,042ft

Group Size

2 - 30

Best Season

Feb, Mar, Apr, May, June, Sep, Oct, Nov & Dec

Activities

6 hr Trekking

Trek Distance

177.8km/110 miles

Transportation

Private transfer

Accommodation

Tea house

Meals

All Meals (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner) during the trek

Difficulty

Hard Physical training before the trip should begin no later than 2 months before, as you will have a height of 3,000 meters above sea level and more. Hiking is from 6 km daily with an average pace that can be maintained for hours. It is important to have physical fitness & endurance. You will also need the right gear and clothes according to the weather.

Highlights of Upper Mustang Trek

- Explore Lo Manthang, the walled city known as Nepal's "Last Forbidden Kingdom," rich in history and culture.
- Walk through beautiful villages like Kagbeni, Chele, Syangboche, and Ghami, where traditions are still alive.
- Trek across dry, open landscapes that feel like part of Tibet, with wide valleys and dramatic hills.
- Enter a restricted part of the Annapurna region, far from the crowds and full of mystery.
- Discover unique plants and wildlife that thrive in this high, remote region.
- Visit ancient caves, monasteries, and historic palaces that tell stories from centuries past.
- Follow the ancient trade trail across the Himalayas, with its strange rock formations and quiet, dusty paths.
- Enjoy stunning views of mountains like Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, and Nilgiri along the way.
- Feel the peaceful energy as you pass prayer flags, stone chortens, and colorful Buddhist sites.

Upper Mustang Trek Day by Day Itinerary

Day 01: Arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu and transfer to hotel (1,400m/4,593ft)

As soon as you land at Tribhuvan International Airport, our representative will welcome you with a Khata. From there, you'll be comfortably transferred to your hotel in our private vehicle without stress or hassle. Rest for a while, then we'll gather to discuss the daily travel planning.

The rest of the time, you can explore around the streets in **Thamel** to shop for last-minute gear, enjoy local food, or immerse yourself in the ambiance. Or you can also visit nearby places like **Kathmandu Durbar Square** and **Swoyambhunath Stupa** for a quick cultural immersion.

Highest Altitude:

1,400m/4,593ft

Accommodations:

3 Star Hotel

Day 02: Mustang permit preparation and fly to Pokhara (820m/2,690ft)

Attraction of the Day: Lakeside

On the second day, you will have breakfast at the hotel and make preparations for the restricted permit. Since the Upper Mustang is restricted, you'll need a restricted area permit (RAP) to trek there. After getting the permit, we will drive to Tribhuvan International Airport's domestic terminal in the afternoon and take a 25-minute flight to Pokhara.

During the flight, if weather favor you can view beautiful mountain vistas of Annapurna, Machhapuchhre (Fishtail), and Dhaulagiri, so make sure to capture them. After landing, we will check in at a 3-star hotel in the Lakeside area for an overnight stay. Later in the evening, explore the area and enjoy boating on Fewa Lake. And if you're not ready to call it a night, step out into Pokhara's nightlife, where street

musicians and open-air cafés create the perfect evening buzz.

Highest Altitude:

1,400m/4,593ft

Meals:

Breakfast

Accommodations:

3-star hotel

Flight Hours:

25 mins

Day 03: Drive from Pokhara to Kagbeni (2,800m/9,186ft)

Highest Altitude of Day: 2,800m/9,186ft (Kagbeni)

Our morning begins early on this day. We will have breakfast and go on a scenic drive to Kagbeni passing through diverse landscapes, charming countryside areas, picturesque terrace farms, lush valleys, and river banks. We also can get a clear view of the mountain ranges in the distance. The winding road becomes more rocky and off-road after passing by the Beni Bazaar.

From there, we will ride by the Kali Gandaki River and then follow the world's deepest gorge, the **Kali Gandaki Gorge**. After we pass Jomsom, the trail becomes more desert-like and dry. The lush vegetation becomes sparse as we move ahead. After a drive of around 7 hours, we will reach Kagbeni village. It is an ancient village of Mustang and a gateway to Upper Mustang. We will stay overnight here.

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Day 04: Trek from Kagbeni to Chele (3,100m/10,171ft)

Our trekking journey to Upper Mustang officially begins from Kagbeni. As we leave the village, we must show our Upper Mustang permits at a checkpoint. From this point on, we step into a part of Nepal that only a few get to explore: the ancient, mysterious **kingdom of Mustang**. We will trek alongside the eastern bank of the Kali Gandaki River to reach Tangbe. Here, you'll see unique rock formations and red sandstone pillars. Fun fact, they're natural.

From Chhuksang, we cross a small river and leave the Kali Gandaki Valley behind. The path gets steeper, with rocky terrain guiding us upward toward Chele. The change in scenery is as rewarding as the climb itself: raw, rugged, and rich with a sense of ancient history. Then, we end the day in Chele, where a warm meal and mountain hospitality await.

Distance:

6 Hours

Ascent:

380m/1,247ft

Descend:

80m/262ft

Highest Altitude:

3,100m/10,171ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Trek Distance:

16.8km/10.4miles

Day 05: Trek from Chele to Syangboche (3,800m/12,467ft)

After breakfast at Chele, we will continue with our trek. The trek difficulty will slightly increase as we ascend and descend on varied steeper and more rugged terrain. Regardless, we will gradually make our way through the massive eroded canyons to Eklo Bhatti. En route, we can witness breathtaking views of Damodar Danda, Ramchung Cave, Tilicho Peak, and Yaskawa Kang. Then, we will cross the **Taklam La mountain pass** and **Dajori Pass** successively.

Just before we start going downhill, we pass the colorful **Rangchyang Chorten**. It is painted in **red, yellow, white, and black**, so it naturally stands out in the quiet, dry landscape like a spiritual sign. After this, we walk down to the peaceful Samar **village**, then cross a small stream at the bottom of the valley. From there, we climb up again through juniper forests and small bushes. After some ups and downs, we finally reach the quiet village of **Syangboche**, set deep in the valley. We will spend the night here, resting in the peaceful beauty of Mustang.

***Note:** As we ascend above 3,800m today, please stay well-hydrated, proceed slowly, and inform your trek guide if you experience any discomfort. The itinerary is paced to allow gradual altitude gain; however, if you want a rest day, you can take it.*

Distance:

7 Hours

Ascent:

900m/2,953ft

Descend:

160m/525ft

Highest Altitude:

3,800m/12,467ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Trek Distance:

21.2km/13miles

Day 06: Trek from Syangboche to Ghami (3,510m/11,516ft) via Nyi La Pass (4,020m/13,189ft)

After breakfast in **Syangboche**, we start climbing steadily toward **Nyi La Pass**, one of the higher points on the Upper Mustang route. The trail opens up to wide, dry landscapes, featuring rolling hills, deep-cut valleys, and distant snow-capped peaks. As we gain height, we reach the top where colorful prayer flags flutter in the wind. We'll pause here to take a moment of peace.

Then, we descend on a winding trail until we reach **Ghami**, a big village in this area. Ghami is renowned for its ancient monasteries, extensive prayer walls, and traditional Tibetan-style houses. We'll stay here for the night and soak in the slow, quiet pace of life that makes Mustang feel so special.

Distance:

7 Hours

Ascent:

345m/1,132ft

Descend:

635m/2,083ft

Highest Altitude:

4,020m/13,189ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Trek Distance:

19.5km/12miles

Day 07: Trek from Ghami to Charang (3,560m/11,680ft)

On day 7, we will cross the Ghami Khola before ascending to a plateau to reach our next destination Charang. We will cross the **Charang La Pass** and come across a long mani wall. It is 250 meters long with Tibetan mantras engraved on it. Similarly, we will also come across several other mani walls as we reach Charang.

As we go deeper, the landscape becomes barren, with no signs of vegetation. Likewise, the population also becomes sparse. The Charang village sits at the top of the Charang Chu canyon, offering a view of rocky hills and snow-capped mountains. It also has a red Gumpa with stunning sculptures and a massive medieval fortress. We will rest overnight in Charang village after long day of hike.

Distance:

6 Hours

Ascent:

360m/1,181ft

Descend:

310m/1,017ft

Highest Altitude:

3,560m/11,680ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Trek Distance:

11.5km/7miles

Day 08: Trek from Charang to Lo Manthang (3,840m/12,598ft)

Today is an important day for us as we will finally begin our trek to Lo Manthang. We will start by descending from the Charang village to Charang Chu Canyon. En route, we will come across a large isolated chorten. It is a significant landmark that separates Charang from Lo Manthang. Then the trail gradually begins to ascend from here onwards. We will cross a river and then the Lo La Pass, from where we will lay our eyes on Lo-Manthang for the first time.

From the pass, we can also get stunning views of Mount Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, Nilgiri, and other surrounding peaks. We will continue trekking until we reach Lo-Manthang, the capital of the ancient **Kingdom Lo**. It's home to the Lo people, who still proudly carry on their unique culture. We'll see high

walls around it, guarding the city and its historic landmarks. Upon entering the city, you can sense a strong Tibetan influence in its buildings, monasteries, and way of life.

Distance:

6 Hours

Ascent:

390m/1,280ft

Descend:

110m/361ft

Highest Altitude:

3,950m/12,959ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Trek Distance:

18km/11miles

Day 09: Exploring Lo-Manthang (day trip to Chhoser Cave)

Today, we will spend our day exploring Lo-Manthang. After breakfast, we will visit **Chhoser Cave**, also known as Jhong and Sky Caves. Its history dates back **2,500 years**. These are five-story man-made caves built into the cliffs. It is impossible to determine why or who created these caves. Some researchers believe that these caves are burial chambers. Meanwhile, others believe that these caves serve as hiding places or are used for meditation.

After exploring cave, we will return to explore the village while taking in the stunning views. You can visit various cultural landmarks and heritages like the **Lo Manthang Royal Palace, Jampa Lhakhang, Thubchen, and other monasteries**. You can also experience the local culture and customs of the residents, who follow the Bonpo form of Tibetan Buddhism. We will stay another night at Lo Manthang.

Distance:

6 Hours

Highest Altitude:

3,840m/12,598ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Day 10: Trek back from Lo Manthang to Dhakmar (3,820m/12,533ft) via Ghar gumba

On the tenth trek day, it is time to bid goodbye to Lo Manthang and begin our descent to Dhakmar. We will leave the walled city and start with a steep ascent to Chogo La. This pass stretches through the area and is challenging but adventurous. Then, we will gradually begin following the trail to Lo Gekar. In Lo Gekar, there is the **world's oldest Tibetan monastery, Ghar Gompa**. The monastery was built around the 7th century and houses beautiful rock paintings.

We will continue trekking and cross the Mui La Pass. Similarly, we will traverse Muila Bhanjyang before reaching the beautiful Dhamkar village. There are numerous cliff caves above the village's hilltops. We will rest our tired bodies at a tea house in Dhamkar village for the night and have delicious dal bhat

dinner.

Distance:

8 Hours

Ascent:

690m/2,264ft

Descend:

710m/2,329ft

Highest Altitude:

4,280m/14,042ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Trek Distance:

21km/13miles

Day 11: Trek back from Dhakmar to Ghiling (3,570m/11,713ft)

We will start our trek early today as strong winds may start blowing in the afternoon. The early morning trail takes us through a dry plateau in a remote landscape. There are very few trekkers on this beautiful trek, so the atmosphere is serene and quiet. We will keep descending while passing small Tibetan Nepali settlements and walled village fields.

The trail takes us past Ghami village, and we will cross the Nyi La Pass again. After conquering the pass for the second time, the trail begins to descend through dry plateau and wind-swept fields. Finally, after an arduous trek, we will reach Ghiling where we will spend our night. If time favors, you can explore this beautiful small village.

Distance:

7 Hours

Ascent:

445m/1,460ft

Descend:

695m/2,280ft

Highest Altitude:

3,765m/12,352ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Trek Distance:

18km/59miles

Day 12: Trek back from Ghiling to Chhusang (2,980m/9,778ft)

On this day, we will retrace our steps on familiar trails past Syangboche and enter the lush forest route, welcoming a splash of green after days of rocky desert landscapes. As we reach **Samar**, the mountains put on another show, definitely the kind that will make you stop mid-step to stare. We'll continue past scattered villages and quiet valleys, crossing Dajori La and Taklam La once again.

After a rewarding descent, we'll roll into Chele, and from there, make our way down to Chhuksang, our stop for the night. With the Kali Gandaki River glimmering below and snow-capped peaks in the distance,

you'll forget you've been here before because it still feels brand new.

Distance:

7 Hours

Ascent:

440m/1,444ft

Descend:

1,030m/3,379ft

Highest Altitude:

3,850m/12,631ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Trek Distance:

28km/17miles

Day 13: Trek back from Chhusang to Jomsom (2,720m/8,924ft)

After spending the night in Chhuksung, we will continue our descent after breakfast. The trail takes us through Jharkot, a village just above Kagbeni. From here, we will exit the restricted area of Upper Mustang and join the Annapurna Circuit trek trail. As we continue trekking, we will reach the Kagbeni village, which offers stunning views of the Kali Gandaki Valley. We will continue trekking until we reach Jomsom. We will spend the day at a teahouse in Jomsom.

Distance:

7 Hours

Ascent:

130m/427ft

Descend:

340m/1,115ft

Highest Altitude:

3,060m/10,039ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Accommodations:

Tea House or Lodge

Trek Distance:

23.8km/14.7miles

Day 14: Drive back to Pokhara (820m/2,690ft)

- **Attraction of the day:** local villages, lake side

After breakfast, we will board a jeep to return to Pokhara. The jeep will take us through the desert-like arid landscapes of Mustang to the lush greenery of Pokhara city. The road is rough, gravelly, and bumpy as we slowly drive along the Kali Gandaki River, passing by Tatopani and Beni.

We will see the familiar sight as we drive past charming countryside, rivers, waterfalls, and green forest hills. It can take around 8 hours to get to Pokhara, depending on the road conditions. We will stay at a 3-star hotel overnight. You can enjoy the last day in Pokhara as you please.

Highest Altitude:

2,720m/8,924ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodations:

3 Star hotel

Day 15: Drive back to Kathmandu (1,400m/4,593ft)

Today, we will return to the capital city, Kathmandu. We will take an early morning jeep ride from our hotel. The ride on the winding Prithvi Highway passes through beautiful villages, terrace farms, riverbanks, and lush hills. As we leave Pokhara, the mountain views become increasingly distant. It can take 6-7 hours to reach Kathmandu, depending on the road conditions and traffic. You can rest, and we will hold a farewell dinner in the evening. You can shop around Thamel for souvenirs or enjoy the nightlife with the remaining time.

Highest Altitude:

2,720m/8,924ft

Meals:

Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations:

3 Star hotel

Day 16: Transfer to the International Airport for your Final Departure

It's final day of the trip. One of our representative from Himalayan 360 will help you transfer to Tribhuvan International Airport two hours before your scheduled flight. We hope you had a memorable time with us and will remember us for future trips. Have a safe flight back home!

Meals:

Breakfast

Upper Mustang Trek Includes/Excludes

Included

- Airport Transfer
- Kathmandu to Pokhara by Flight
- Pokhara to Kagbeni by Sharing Local Jeep
- Jomsom to Pokhara by Public Jeep/Bus
- Pokhara to Kathmandu by Tourist Bus

- 2 Night Kathmandu in a 3-star hotel (sharing basis)
- 2 Night in Pokhara 3 Star hotel (sharing basis)
- 11 nights in Mountain Tea House Lodge (sharing basis)
- **Food:** 15 Breakfast, 12 lunch, 12 Dinner

- Government-licensed English-speaking local trek leader

- Mustang Special region permit
- Annapurna Conservation Area permit

- Gov. and local tax and agency service charges
- Free luggage storage services in Kathmandu
- Appreciation Certificate after the successful trek
- Free consulting services before & after trek book
- Farewell dinner at the end of the trek
- Staff insurance, salary, equipment, food & clothing.
- Duffle bag during trek (should return after trek)
- **MEDICAL KIT:** Comprehensive Medical kit.

Excluded

- International flight
- Domestic flights (ie: Jomsom to Pokhara and Pokhara to Kathmandu)
- Private transfer during the trek
- Extra transfer which is not mentioned in itinerary
- Extra night accommodation in Kathmandu due to early arrival or late departure, or early return from the trek
- Extra nights in Pokhara
- Extra night during Trekking
- Porter to carry bags (2:1porter)
- Nepal visa fees
- Travel insurance that covers emergency high-altitude rescue and evacuation (compulsory)
- Personal clothing and gear and Personal expenses: shopping, snacks, boiled water, drinks, hot shower, alcohol, Wi-Fi, calls, battery charging, extra porters, etc.
- Tips for staff (it is expected)
- All other costs and expenses not listed in “including”
- **Additional cost:** Additional costs incurred due to causes beyond our control, for example weather conditions, landslides, itinerary modifications, illness, government policies change, strikes, etc.

Group Discounts Available

No. of Persons	Price per Person
2 - 2	USD 2,099
3 - 3	USD 1,888
4 - 6	USD 1,822
7 - 12	USD 1,766
13 - 20	USD 1,733
21 - 30	USD 1,666

FAQ's about Upper Mustang Trek

Why is Upper Mustang famous?

Upper Mustang is famous for being Nepal's last "Forbidden Kingdom," with one of the world's most well-preserved ancient heritages. The region was restricted until 1992 and still requires a special permit for access. It boasts an interesting geography, featuring arid landscapes and unique formations. This way, Upper Mustang is famous for its distinctive landscapes, rich cultural immersion, and adventurous trek experience.

How far is Upper Mustang from Pokhara?

Upper Mustang is approximately 370 km (230 miles) from Pokhara. However, the distance can vary slightly as the roads leading to Upper Mustang are winding. You can either drive from Pokhara to Upper Mustang or take a short flight from Pokhara to Jomsom and then begin your trek. You can also take a jeep or a [heli tour](#) from Jomsom to Upper Mustang.

Can you take a solo Upper Mustang Trek?

No, you cannot take a solo Upper Mustang Trek as it is in a restricted area of the country. The Department of Immigration does not issue Restricted Area Permits (RAPs) to solo trekkers. Hence, solo trekkers must obtain a permit and hire a certified guide to accompany them during the Upper Mustang Trek.

Is there an altitude-related risk during the Upper Mustang Trek?

The oxygen level in the atmosphere begins to get lower from 2,500 meters, and the highest point of the Upper Mustang trek is 4,280 meters. So, there is a slight chance of altitude-related risk during this trek. Hence, trekkers must take proper precautions and be aware of the symptoms of altitude sickness during the Upper Mustang Trek.

Are ATM facilities available during the Upper Mustang Trek?

ATM facilities are limited to Kathmandu and Pokhara during the Upper Mustang Trek. You will not find ATMs along the trekking route, and even if you find one, the service is unreliable. So, it is best to carry sufficient cash for the trek. You can easily exchange cash at money exchange centers in Kathmandu or Pokhara.

Best time for Upper Mustang Trek

The best time for the Upper Mustang Trek are spring (March-May) and autumn (September-November). These seasons have the best weather and climatic conditions. Take a look at the brief of each season:

Autumn (September to November)

Autumn is one of the most suitable times for trekking in Nepal. The weather is clear and consistent, with warm temperatures ranging from 12°C to 20°C during the day and from -8°C to -4°C at night. The skies are clear, hence you can get excellent views of the mountains and minimal rain. The lower areas have autumn leaves decorating the trekking routes even more beautifully. Since more people trek in autumn, so it is wise to reserve your accommodation and transportation in advance.

Spring (March to May)

Spring is another great time for the Upper Mustang Trek. The weather is pleasant, with daytime temperatures between **16°C and 22°C**, and nights just a little chilly, sometimes dipping below zero. The trails come to life with colorful blooms and active wildlife, making the journey feel fresh and full of energy. Plus, **if you trek in May, you might catch the Tiji Festival in Lo Manthang**. This festival lasts three days, featuring masked dances, ancient rituals, and a festive atmosphere. It's a rare chance not just to see Upper Mustang, but feel its culture come alive. Nature's at its best, locals are celebrating, and you're right in the heart of it all.

Summer (April to June)

While most of Nepal receives heavy rainfall during the monsoon, Upper Mustang remains mostly dry, thanks to its location in the rain shadow of the Himalayas. So, while the lower trails in Nepal are often muddy and humid, this region remains a reliable escape, offering clearer skies and drier paths. Daytime temperatures range from **16°C to 25°C**, and nights can dip to around **-3°C to 0°C**, making it quite comfortable for high-altitude trekking. The rainfall that reaches lower regions brings lush greenery and cleaner air, giving the surrounding hills a fresh, vibrant appearance as you travel north.

If you're looking to avoid crowds and still enjoy dramatic desert landscapes, summer is actually one of the [best time to trek in Mustang](#). You get the best of both worlds, monsoon-cleansed views below and dry, dramatic terrain above.

Winter (December to February)

Winter in Upper Mustang brings extreme cold, heavy snow, and limited services. Most locals leave Lo Manthang for lower altitudes, and many lodges close during this time. As a result, we do not recommend trekking to Upper Mustang in winter.

Accommodation on Upper Mustang Trek

The standard accommodations generally available along the trekking routes of Nepal, including the Upper Mustang, are the **tea houses**. A tea house is a lodge that **offers accommodation and meal facilities**. Likewise, it provides a place for trekkers to socialize. **Locals run the tea houses**, and you can experience their warm hospitality in the services they offer. Tea houses may be basic in facilities, but are the ultimate way to experience mountain hospitality.

The tea houses usually **have shared rooms or dormitories**. These **rooms have beds and mattresses with limited furniture**. **There are blankets and pillows**, but the rooms **lack heating facilities**, so it is advisable to bring a sleeping bag. Likewise, the **bathrooms are mostly communal**, with either squat-style or Western-style toilet seats. It is rare to find single rooms with attached bathrooms at these tea houses. During peak season, you may have to share rooms with other trekkers.

Similarly, teahouses **have communal dining spaces with massive stoves in the middle for heating**. Due to their rural location, most tea houses lack electricity, and the lights are powered by solar energy. As a result, you may have to pay additional fees to charge your electronic devices. These tea houses **may offer WiFi or internet facilities, but the connectivity is rather poor**. It is unsuitable for heavy data-intensive work. You will also have to pay additional fees for the Internet.

These accommodations also provide meals; you can **try local cuisines, such as stews, dal bhat**, and enjoy drinks like Tibetan tea. They also provide boiled or filtered water for an extra charge. These tea houses are the window to the local culture and traditions. They reflect the local culture of the region. *The tea houses in the lower Mustang region reflect hilly Nepalese culture, while those in the Upper Mustang region have heavy Tibetan cultural influence.* It offers a glimpse of the local customs and lifestyle.

Upper Mustang Trek Difficulty

Upper Mustang is a demanding, high-altitude trek. It **requires good health and fitness** to conquer the challenging trails. Although prior trekking experience is not necessary, having one helps. The trek is **suitable for both beginners and seasoned trekkers**, but they must prepare both physically and mentally for the journey.

During the Upper Mustang Trek, you will trek from subtropical, verdant landscapes to desert-like arid landscapes. The winding routes have rough and rugged terrains. As you ascend to higher elevations, the trails become dusty and steeper, and you will mostly trek on loose gravel. Moreover, the average trekking time is 6 hours, which makes the journey physically demanding. The maximum altitude of the Upper Mustang Trek is 4,280 meters. Hence, there is also the risk of altitude-related sickness.

Another factor that makes the trek difficult is the unpredictable [weather](#) conditions. Despite the season, they change rapidly at higher elevations. Strong winds are common at the main trekking routes to the Upper Mustang in the afternoon. The temperature also drops significantly at night and in the mornings. There is also a lack of infrastructure along the trekking route. Many trekkers feel mentally stressed due to the changing environment, lack of connectivity, and unfamiliarity. In addition to the physical challenge, the trek can mentally drain you. You can complete the Upper Mustang Trek successfully with proper preparation, the right gear, and adherence to the safety guidelines.

AMS Guidance and Remedies during Upper Mustang Trek

Altitude sickness is common among trekkers ascending to altitudes above 2,500 meters. The reason for this is the thinning of the atmosphere's air. The oxygen level and air pressure in the atmosphere decrease as altitude increases. The lack of oxygen supply can result in various symptoms of altitude sickness. These symptoms can vary from person to person, and based on them, there are three forms of altitude sickness:

Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS): It is the mildest form of altitude sickness. AMS is common among trekkers (over 25%) who rapidly ascend to higher altitudes. You can cure AMS by descending to lower

altitudes or taking simple medications like Diamox. Its symptoms include nausea, headache, dizziness, swelling, insomnia, loss of appetite, and difficulty breathing.

High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE): It is a more severe form of altitude sickness. HAPE occurs when the body's lack of oxygen causes fluid to accumulate in the lungs. The symptoms include fatigue, chest tightness or pain, shortness of breath, persistent dry cough, and blue or gray fingertips. These symptoms usually develop within the first two to four days of ascending to a higher altitude. It can quickly turn fatal, so immediate medical assistance is necessary.

High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE): It is another severe form of altitude sickness. HACE occurs due to the lack of oxygen in the body, which leads to fluid accumulating in the brain. It is a progressive form of AMS and very dangerous. The symptoms include severe headache, nausea, disorientation, lack of coordination, and changes in behaviour. That being said, immediate medical assistance is crucial, and the patient must quickly descend to a lower altitude.

Remedies for AMS

There are several ways you can avoid or minimize the risk of altitude sickness. They are as follows:

- The best way to avoid altitude-related sickness is to gradually ascend to higher elevation areas. It helps your body get used to the changing surroundings and altitude.
- Take adequate rest or acclimatization days in between while climbing to higher elevations. Schedule the rest days at 3,000 meters and above 4,200 meters for the best result.
- Keep yourself well-hydrated throughout the trek. Drink at least 2 to 4 liters of water. You can also add electrolyte tablets or sports drinks to hydrate your body.
- Eat a healthy and nutritious diet. As you will have to climb physically demanding uphill and downhill trails, it is best to eat a high-carb and protein-rich diet for energy.
- Follow the rule of sleeping low and climbing high. It is always best to descend to lower elevations to sleep at night.
- During a high-altitude trek, it is best to avoid excessive intake of caffeine, alcohol, and smoking tobacco.

Do we need porters for the Upper Mustang Trek?

Hiring a porter is not mandatory for the Upper Mustang Trek, but we highly recommend it. Trekking to Upper Mustang is a physically and mentally demanding journey. Climbing uphill and downhill on varied terrain with a heavy backpack further adds physical strain on trekkers. It can also be hazardous, as trekkers may lose their footing and slip on rocky terrain, resulting in accidents and injuries. Therefore, hiring a porter relieves you from the physical strain of carrying heavy luggage.

Porters help provide logistical assistance during the Upper Mustang Trek. They carry all your essential trekking gear and can provide vital assistance and support in emergencies. The weight limit for a porter is 18 to 20 kg. Usually, a single porter carries the luggage of two trekkers. Further, most porters are locals from the region, so they possess a deep knowledge of the area. They can navigate the trails while providing insights into the local history, culture, and customs. Additionally, you will also be contributing to the local economy by hiring a porter. You will be providing them with employment and a source of income. The cost of hiring a porter can vary from USD 25 to USD 30 per day. This cost covers their insurance, accommodations, meals, and equipment.

To sum up, although hiring a porter is not mandatory, you should consider doing so. Hiring a porter for the trek allows you to enjoy the journey without carrying your baggage. They also help to avoid physical strain and overexertion. Leave the heavy lifting to them and just focus on enjoying the trek.

Meals at the Upper Mustang Trek

You will find small local eateries along the route to Upper Mustang. The teahouses and lodges also provide healthy meals. Since you will be trekking for 5 to 6 hours a day, you will need nutritious food to keep your body energized. Most ingredients used for cooking are locally sourced. You will mostly find staple Nepalese cuisines on the menu, but you can also find international dishes.

Similarly, you don't have to worry about finding safe drinking water during the journey. You can buy bottled water and also get boiled or filtered water. It is best to carry your thermal bottle and refill it as needed. You can also bring snacks or energy bars for quick bites during the trek.

Here are a few meal options you can find while on the Upper Mustang Trek:

Breakfast

Eggs, oatmeal, cornflakes, Tibetan bread, toast, jam, butter, cheese, porridge, muesli, chapati, fruits, vegetables, and drinks (teas, coffees, hot chocolates, etc).

Lunch

Daal Bhat, curries, Tibetan bread, chapati, Sherpa stew, momo (dumplings), pasta, spaghetti, Tenduk, thukpa, chowmein, french fries, salad, pizza, burger, steak, sandwiches, noodles, desserts (rice pudding, pies, etc), and drinks (teas, coffees, hot chocolates, juice, soft drinks, etc).

Dinner

Daal Bhat, Tibetan bread, chapati, soups, steaks, momo (dumplings), Sherpa stew, pasta, spaghetti, Tenduk, thukpa, chowmein, french fries, salad, pizza, burger, steak, sandwiches, noodles, desserts (rice pudding, pies, etc.), and drinks (teas, coffees, hot chocolates, juice, soft drinks, and alcoholic beverages).

Note: *The package covers three meals during the trek, except in Pokhara and Kathmandu. All drinks, except standard meals, are the trekker's personal expense. If you have any dietary restrictions, let us know when booking, and we will make the arrangements accordingly.*

Why Choose Upper Mustang Trek?

Tucked away in the Himalayas, Upper Mustang is a remote treasure that promises a one-of-a-kind and unforgettable trekking adventure. Here's why to choose Upper Mustang Trek:

Traditional Tibetan Buddhist Culture

Lo Manthang, the ancient capital of Upper Mustang, lies close to the Tibetan border. Hence, Tibetan Buddhism has had a massive influence on the region. As the area was secluded from the outside world for hundreds of years, it has one of the most well-preserved heritages. So, you can see the influence of Tibetan Buddhism on these heritages on this trek.

En route to Upper Mustang, you will also encounter several ancient monasteries, gompas, chortens, mani walls, and vibrant prayer flags. The serene atmosphere and the ancient heritage will allow you a spiritual encounter. There is no better way to experience and observe traditional Tibetan Buddhist culture than through the Upper Mustang Trek.

Off the Beaten Adventurous Path

The trekking trails of Upper Mustang go through remote and lesser-known areas of the Annapurna region. Its off-the-beaten-path, dusty, and twisting trails are full of scenic beauty. They are challenging but, at the same time, adventurous.

The trails take you through traditional settlements, unique rock formations, ancient caves, monasteries, and more, all the way to Lo Manthang. Compared to the other popular and commercialized trek routes of the Annapurna region, the trails are less traveled and quieter. Hence, trekkers can enjoy a serene atmosphere while enjoying the spectacular scenery.

Dhaulagiri and Annapurna Range Views

Upper Mustang region provides an excellent opportunity to witness and capture stunning mountain panoramas of the Annapurna region, contrasting the clear blue skies. You can enjoy the view of the snow-covered mountain panoramas of Mount Annapurna I, Annapurna II, Annapurna IV, Dhaulagiri, Lamjung Himal, Nilgiri, Thorung Peak, Chulu West, Chulu East, and Tukuche Peak.

Furthermore, the hilltop from places like Kagbeni and Lo Manthang offers wider, crystal-clear sights of these panoramas. With these mountain vistas in the background, you can also witness gorgeous sunrises and sunsets. It makes for brilliant photography moments.

Arid or Rain Shadow Area

The Upper Mustang is located in a rain shadow area of Nepal, meaning this region gets no to very little rain throughout the year. Because of this, the landscapes here are dry and dusty, similar to a desert. The hills are naked here. You can see rugged cliffs and eroded canyons while trekking.

These cliffs and red-brown canyons provide lovely contrast views of the snowy mountains nearby. There isn't much greenery here compared to other trekking routes in the hilly regions. Therefore, hiking on these trans-Himalayan caravan trails is a truly special experience.

History of Forbidden Kingdom: Lo-Manthang

Upper Mustang was an independent kingdom with a close relationship to Tibet. Ame Pal founded the kingdom of Lo in 1380. He built the walled city of Lo Manthang as the capital of Upper Mustang. From the 15th to 17th centuries, it was used for trade between Tibet and India. According to historical records, during the Sino-Nepalese War, Lo Manthang supported Tibet and the Qing Empire.

Mustang used to serve as the trading route between Tibet and Nepal. The route was used to import rock salt, wool, powdered gold, yaks, and horses. After Nepal started importing iodized salt from India, the trade route gradually became less used. In the 18th century, Nepal annexed Mustang, becoming part of the country in 1795. However, it remained an independent region. It was only in the 1950s that Lo Manthang became a part of Nepal.

Meanwhile, Tibet became part of China in 1950. The Tibetan administration was against this consolidation and deemed it a Chinese invasion. Upper Mustang became a hiding base for the CIA and Tibetan Khampa fighters. The war continued until the 1970s, and the region was closed to outsiders. Lo Manthang finally opened its doors to travelers in 1992. Due to its isolated status, it remained one of the world's most well-preserved regions. Hence, Lo Manthang was labeled "**The Last Forbidden Kingdom.**"

The age-old Lo Manthang Palace dates back to 1442 and has five stories. There are several monasteries within the walled city. Similarly, there are around 10,000 mysterious sky caves dug into the mountain cliffs. Thousands of artifacts and even mummified human bodies were discovered in these caves. Even now, the region remains a restricted area as it lies close to Tibet. So, you need a special permit to access the region.

Why does Upper Mustang Trek fall under the Restricted Area?

Upper Mustang lies close to the Tibetan border, so it is a restricted area for security purposes. Another reason is to preserve its ancient cultural heritage and environment. The Last Forbidden Kingdom boasts one of the world's most well-preserved heritages, featuring palaces, monasteries, caves, and artifacts. The restricted area begins after Kagbeni.

All trekkers must obtain a Restricted Area Permit (RAP) for the Upper Mustang Trek. There are several checkpoints where you must present your trek permits. Aside from the restricted area permit, you will also need an ACAP (Annapurna Conservation Area Project Permit).

Restricted Area Permit (RAP)

It is a special permit for entering the Upper Mustang. The permit costs USD 500 per person for the first ten days. After ten days, you must pay USD 50 per person per day. The Department of Immigration in Kathmandu distributes this permit.

Annapurna Conservation Area Project Permit (ACAP)

Upper Mustang lies within the Annapurna region. Hence, trekkers must obtain an Annapurna Conservation Area Project Permit (ACAP). The permit costs NPR 3000 per person for SAARC residents and NPR 1000 per person for non-SAARC residents. Children below the age of ten are eligible for free entry. Trekkers can obtain a permit in Kathmandu or Pokhara.

Packing essentials for Upper Mustang Trek

Clothing & Footwear

- Short and long-sleeved trekking shirts and t-shirts
- Thermal base layers (top and bottom)
- Windproof/ waterproof jackets
- Down/ fleece jacket and sweater
- Lightweight trekking pants
- Warm trousers

- Sun hats, beanies, gloves, and scarves
- Trekking socks
- Moisture-wicking inner garments
- Comfortable and sturdy trekking shoes
- Sandals or flip-flops
- Gaiters

Equipment & Gear

- Backpack (40 – 50 liters)
- Day rucksack
- Raincover and raincoat
- Adjustable trekking pole
- Water bottle
- Sleeping bag
- Flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- Adapters and chargers
- Toiletries

Miscellaneous

- First aid kit and personal medications
- Water purification tablets
- Smartphone, camera, and binoculars
- Books or journals
- Snacks and energy bars

Alternate Jeep Tour to Upper Mustang

If you have limited time but want to explore the Upper Mustang, you can take an alternate jeep tour. It is short, and you do not have to take the physically demanding trek. You will travel by jeep, which is a more comfortable and convenient mode of transportation. However, it does not make the trek less adventurous. You will ride on the bumpy and rugged landscape of Upper Mustang, which is a thrilling experience. Additionally, beginners, families with children, and elderly individuals can also enjoy this awesome experience.

Similarly, you will ride through the barren ridges, rocky cliffs, eroded canyons, and the world's deepest gorge, the Kali Gandaki Valley. En route, you will traverse traditional settlements like Jomsom, Kagbeni, Chukksang, and more to reach Lo Manthang. You will get to explore the walled city and also witness its ancient heritages and snow-capped mountain vistas. Moreover, you can take side trips to the **holy pilgrimage of Muktinath**.

In short, the [Upper Mustang Jeep Tour](#) is an exciting overland trip that allows you to experience a true trans-Himalayan journey. There is no need to physically exert yourself when you can travel conveniently with a Jeep Tour!

Address

Address:

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