Trek Curator
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# Upper Mustang Trek - 17 Days

The Upper Mustang trek takes you to the last forbidden kingdom, historically and culturally linked to Tibet. Situated in the remote central region of Nepal, bordering Tibet, this area reaches altitudes above 4,000 meters in the Lo Manthang region. Upper Mustang is home to ancient trade routes connecting Nepal and Tibet. To preserve its unique culture and landscape, access for foreigners was restricted until 1992. Today, it offers a rare opportunity to explore a region that is heavily influenced by Tibetan culture, providing rare insights into Himalayan Tibetan traditions. The traditional village houses are constructed from brick and mud.

Upper Mustang features dramatic landscapes that differ from the green Himalayan treks, showcasing deserts with red cliffs, barren valleys, and unique rock formations. Also, it is a high-altitude cold desert with an arid climate and sparse vegetation.

## Highlights

- Warm and hospitable local Tibetan-speaking communities
- Walk alongside the world’s deepest gorge, Kali Gandaki
- Enjoy panoramic views of the Himalayan mountain ranges, including Annapurna and Dhaulagiri

## Why Choose This Trek

The Upper Mustang trek offers a blend of adventure, history, and cultural experiences. Its dramatic landscapes and rich cultural tapestry provide perfect opportunities for photography. This region sees fewer tourists compared to other popular treks in Nepal. It is easily accessible via a flight to Jomsom, the starting point of the trek. The trek is suitable for families, including seniors and children. It carries historical significance as a former Himalayan kingdom with well-preserved heritage, allowing for meaningful interactions with locals and a deeper understanding of their

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culture and history.

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## PRICE INCLUDES

- Airport pick-up and drop-off in Kathmandu
- Accommodation in Kathmandu and Pokhara (3-star hotels or similar)
- All accommodations during the trek (guesthouses/tea houses)
- Domestic flights: Pokhara–Jomsom–Pokhara
- All meals during the trek (breakfast, lunch, dinner)
- Experienced English-speaking trekking guide
- Porters to carry luggage during the trek (1 porter per 2 trekkers)
- Trekking permits (Restricted Area Permit for Upper
- Mustang, Annapurna Conservation Area Permit)
- Kathmandu sightseeing tour (Swayambhunath, Pashupatinath, Boudhanath)
- Transportation for sightseeing tours and drives (Kathmandu-Pokhara-Kathmandu)
- Government taxes and service charges
- First aid kit and oxygen cylinder for emergencies

## PRICE EXCLUDES

- International airfare to/from Nepal
- Nepal visa fee (approx. $30 for 15 days)
- Travel insurance (strongly recommended)
- Personal trekking gear and equipment (boots, sleeping bag, walking poles, etc.)

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- Meals in Kathmandu and Pokhara (except those included)
- Drinks (tea, coffee, alcohol, bottled water)
- Tips for guides and porters
- Optional activities or sightseeing not mentioned
- Expenses due to flight delays or cancellations (weather-related)
- Personal expenses (laundry, phone calls, internet)
- Any extra accommodation or meals due to early arrival or late departure
- Equipment rental (if needed)
- Emergency evacuation (unless covered by insurance)

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# DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day 1: Arrive in Kathmandu [1,300 m / 4,264 ft]

Upon arriving at Tribhuvan International Airport, you will be greeted by our representative, who will assist you in transferring to your hotel. If necessary, you can purchase a mobile SIM card and exchange currency. You have the option to rest or explore Thamel, where you can familiarise yourself with the local markets, cafes, and shops selling trekking gear. In the evening, enjoy a cultural program featuring local cuisine

### Day 2: Kathmandu: Sightseeing and Preparation

After an early breakfast, you will begin your sightseeing tour of Kathmandu. You will visit UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including Swayambhunath (Monkey Temple), which offers panoramic views of the city and holds significant cultural and spiritual importance in Buddhism. Next, you'll visit Pashupatinath Temple, a key Hindu pilgrimage site where devotees come to worship Lord Shiva. Then, explore Boudhanath Stupa, one of the largest stupas in Nepal. You may also opt to visit Patan Durbar Square or Bhaktapur Durbar Square for a deeper cultural immersion. During your tours, you can explore local arts and crafts and sample local cuisine. After the tours, you will meet your guide and porter for a briefing on the trekking plan, safety precautions, altitude sickness, and acclimatisation. Permits will be prepared, and gear can be purchased if needed. Enjoy an early dinner and rest for the next day's early departure.

### Day 3: Kathmandu to Pokhara [823m/2,700ft] 6 hrs. drive

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In the morning, you will embark on a scenic 6-hour drive to Pokhara, passing through hills, traditional villages, forests, and beautiful landscapes. Upon arrival, check in at your hotel. You can choose to rest or wander around Phewa Lake, exploring lakeside cafes and markets. Be sure to check the weather forecast for your Jomsom flight, and prepare snacks and water bottles for the flight and trek.

### Day 4: Fly from Pokhara to Jomsom & trek to Kagbeni [2,858m/9,375ft] 3-4 hrs.

Depending on your flight schedule, you will head to the airport for your flight to Jomsom. Enjoy stunning views of Dhaulagiri and Nilgiri peaks, Pokhara, hills, and terraced fields during the flight. After arriving in Jomsom, you will trek along the Kali Gandaki Gorge toward Kagbeni, where you can explore the village, characterised by Tibetan-style architecture, ancient fortress walls, and narrow lanes. Optionally, visit monasteries and village ruins before staying overnight in a simple guesthouse.

### Day 5: Kagbeni to Chele [3,050m/10,004ft] 5-6 hrs.

Begin your trek early in the morning to reach Chele. The route takes you through traditional villages with stone houses and flat roofs, as well as a dry, arid landscape. Observe local farming practices, including barley, buckwheat, and vegetables, while experiencing the traditional Mustang lifestyle. You can stop at Chusang village to explore caves used by ancient monks for meditation. After 5 to 6 hours of trekking, you will reach Chele, where you can explore the caves and fort ruins. Overnight accommodation will be in a guesthouse or a tea house.

### Day 6: Chele to Syanbochen [3,475m/11,398ft] 6-7 hrs.

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Setting off early helps you avoid afternoon winds. The trek from Chele to Syanbochen takes you through a rugged landscape and remote Mustang. You will cross dry riverbeds and rocky trails, passing ancient mani stones and prayer wheels along the way. Gradually ascending to Syanbochen, enjoy views of snow-capped peaks. After 6 to 7 hours of continuous trekking, you will arrive in Syanbochen, an isolated village steeped in Tibetan Buddhist culture. In the evening, you can stroll around and catch the sunset.

### Day 7: Syanbochen to Ghaymi [3,520m/11,546ft] 5-6 hrs.

After breakfast, continue your trek to Ghaymi. The route features a mix of barren landscapes and small farming villages, offering panoramic views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges. Visit the local gompa and traditional Mustang houses. Upon reaching Ghaymi, experience the strong Tibetan influences in the village's architecture and attire. You can explore the village and interact with local children and residents.

### Day 8: Ghaymi to Charang [3,500m/11,480ft] 4-5 hrs.

This is the shortest trekking day, featuring a gradual ascent. You will walk through barley fields and rugged mountain paths to reach Charang, an ancient walled village. Once you arrive, visit the ruins of Charang Dzong (an ancient fortress) and the Charang monasteries. Interact with locals to learn about their culture and history, and observe the traditional arts and crafts in their homes. If available, you may also enjoy a cultural program with locals, along with tasting local cuisine.

### Day 9: Charang to Lo-Mangthang [3,700m/12,136ft] 5-6 hrs.

On this day, you will trek from Charang to Lo Manthang, the walled capital of Upper Mustang. The route takes you through a wide open valley, showcasing beautiful

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landscapes and several small villages. Along the way, you can explore caves that were once used by ancient monks. After arriving in Lo Manthang, feel free to either rest or explore the nearby areas.

### Day 10: Explore Lo-Mangthang

Rise early for a full day of exploration in Lo Manthang. Visit the local museum to learn about Mustang's rich history and culture. Stroll through the old town's cobbled streets and visit important monasteries like Thubchen Gompa. Be sure to witness or attend prayer ceremonies. For those interested, optional short hikes around the Lo Valley offer stunning viewpoints for sunrise or sunset. Engaging with residents provides excellent insight into their culture and history, and you can also purchase handmade crafts directly from the artisans.

### Day 11: Lo-Mangthang to Drakmar [3,810m/12,500ft] 6-7 hrs.

Begin your trek early from Lo Manthang towards Drakmar. The journey will take you across high ridges, open plateaus, and caves, showcasing diverse landscapes and vegetation, including dusty plains and rocky hills. You will have the chance to explore caves that Buddhist monks traditionally used for solitary retreats. After around 6 to 7 hours of trekking, you will arrive in Drakmar, a small, remote settlement with guest houses, where you'll experience warm hospitality from the local people.

### Day 12: Dhakmar to Ghiling [3,806m/12,484ft] 5-6 hrs.

After breakfast, trek through a scenic valley, crossing ridges and riverbeds to reach Ghiling. Along the way, you'll encounter yak grazing areas and wildflower meadows (depending on the season). You can stop at small gompas for prayers or blessings. After

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5 to 6 hours of walking, you'll arrive in Ghiling, notable for its intricate woodwork and stone carvings. Feel free to explore village life and craft shops, where you can purchase crafts directly from local artisans. Overnight accommodations are in family-run guest houses serving local cuisine.

### Day 13: Ghiling to Chhuksang [3,050m/10,004ft] 5-6 hrs.

Your trek from Ghiling will gradually descend to Chhuksang, located near the Kali Gandaki River. You will pass by ancient caves, cliff dwellings, and the remains of fort ruins, all while enjoying scenic views of the surrounding mountains. Upon reaching Chhuksang, you will find a larger village with trade shops and tea houses. Take the opportunity to explore the local market, which sells Tibetan goods, and replenish your trekking snacks and essentials.

### Day 14: Chhuksang to Jomsom [2,700/8,856ft] 6-7 hrs.

On your final trekking day, make your way down to Jomsom from Chhuksang. The trek continues with a steady descent, passing through Marpha village, famous for its apple orchards and traditional crafts. Don't miss visiting the Marpha monastery and local museums. Upon reaching Jomsom, you can celebrate the completion of your trek with a team dinner and, if you wish, explore the area on horseback. In the evening, prepare your gear for the flight the next day.

### Day 15: Fly from Jomsom to Pokhara

Depending on your flight schedule, you will fly back to Pokhara, enjoying aerial views of the Annapurna range. Once in Pokhara, relax by Phewa Lake and visit local markets and handicraft shops. Optional sightseeing opportunities include Davis Falls, Gupteshwor

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Cave, and Peace Pagoda. In the evening, head to the lakeside for refreshments or participate in cultural programs.

### Day 16: Drive from Pokhara to Kathmandu

After breakfast, embark on a scenic 6-7 hour drive back to Kathmandu, passing through beautiful landscapes, hills, terraced fields, and rivers. You can make stops at interesting points, such as Bandipur village. Upon arriving in Kathmandu, take some time for last-minute shopping for souvenirs. In the evening, enjoy a farewell dinner with your trekking group, featuring local cuisine.

### Day 17: Departure Day

On your final day, pack your souvenirs and prepare your travel documents early in the morning. Depending on your flight time, check out from the hotel before our representative assists you with your transfer to the airport, allowing ample time for international check-in. This concludes your unforgettable 17-day trek in Upper Mustang. Say goodbye to Nepal and reflect on your remarkable journey.

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