

Upper Mustang Lo-Manthang Trekking

<https://www.nectravels.com/package/lo-manthang-trekking/>

Upper mustang Lo-Manthang trek brings you into the hidden world of the old Buddhist kingdom of Mustang. It also called to be part of the Tibetan empire and is therefore closely related to Tibet. Tibetan Buddhism is still being practiced in a very pure form and villages are built in Tibetan style with white washed houses with firewood tucked on the roofs.

Not only the culture, also the landscape is very much related to Tibet. Mustang lies in the rain shadow of the Dhaulagiri and you walk in a complete desolate landscape, surrounded by rocks in all kind of colors and bizarre formations. In this barren landscape the villages with their bright colored fields are like an oases .

The trail follows the salt caravan route of the old days, during which the people of Mustang traded Tibetan salt with grain from the lowlands. The goal of the Upper Mustang trek is the capital of Upper Mustang, Lo Mangtang. Lo Mangtang is a medieval town, surrounded by a huge town wall. From the pass Lo La (3950 m) you can see the town shimmering in the distance in the barren landscape. Entering Lo Mangtang through the town gate you enter a different world. It is just wonderful to wander through the narrow alleys. On several corners of the street you can find small groups of women spinning wool and discussing the news of the day. At the end of the afternoon big herds of goats are being let through the city gate and through the narrow alleys, back to their sheds, which are inside the town. In Lo Mangtang you can find the palace of the king, a huge 4 story high building. When the king is at home, you can even pay him a visit sometimes. The king doesn't have any real power anymore, but is of course still highly respected by his people. Besides, there are a few beautiful big monasteries, for example the Thugchen Gompa, built in the 15th century. Or visit the amchi museum and amchi school. An amchi is a traditional Tibetan doctor. There are 2 amchis living in Lo Mangtang, which are also the official doctors of the king. They founded a school to preserve this ancient wisdom. Also interesting is a ride by horse to Chhoser, where you can visit a small monastery and a century old cave dwelling, situated high in the rocks.

Itinerary

Day 01: Kathmandu Arrival & transfer to Hotel.

Arrive at Kathmandu International Airport and get transferred to a hotel. Our Tour Manager will give you the briefing about the trip upon arrival in Hotel.

Day 02: Kathmandu sightseeing

After breakfast proceed for city tour of Kathmandu visiting Durbar Square, complex of palaces, courtyard and temples, built between the 12th and 18th centuries use to be the seat of the ancient Malla kings of Kathmandu. In the afternoon visit the Swoyambunath Stupa and Patan City. Swoyambunath Stupa, atop the hillock is one of the holiest Buddhist sites in Nepal enlisted in the World Heritage Site. Patan City is an enchanting melange of palace buildings, artistic courtyard and former palace complex. One remarkable monument here is a 16th century temple dedicated to the Hindu God Lord Krishna, built entirely of stone.

Day 03: Drive to Pokhara. (210km)6-7 hrs

After breakfast drive to Pokhara. Pokhara is a place of remarkable natural beauty. The serenity of Phewa Lake and the magnificence of the Fishtail Peak rising behind it create an ambiance of peace and tranquility. Pokhara is a perfect place to see the panoramic view of Himalayan region including Annapurna and Dhaulagiri.

Day 04: Fly to Jomsom (2700m) and trek to Kagbeni (2810m)5-6 hrs

We will fly to Jomsom early in the morning to avoid the wind in the afternoon. After landing at the Jomsom airport we will start trekking to Kagbeni following the Kali Gandaki River. The trail goes along the back of the Kaligandaki River, is flat and has a very rough terrain. We will see the mountains Nilgiri, Dhaulagiri, Thorang peak and many more from the trail, in the backdrop. After two hours of walk in the flat land along the bank of Kaligandaki, we reach Kagbeni.

Day 05: Trek to Chuksang (2900m) 5-6 hrs

After breakfast we will leave lower Mustang and enter Upper Mustang. After walking for some time we can see the Gompa Kang and numerous caves in the west. At Tangbe we will get a good opportunity to stretch our legs and try our stamina as we climb up to 3060m. Tangbe is a labyrinth of narrow alleyways; here you will find the typical Mustang chortens painted in black white and red. After 1 hour of further walking we reach the village of Chuksang, where there is majority of Thakali people but they live in harmony with the Bhotias and Gurungs.

Day 06: Trek to Samar (3150m) 5-6 hrs

The walk from Chuksang to Samar lasts for around 4-5 hours and the day is not very tiring so you can take frequent breaks to interact with the villagers and take pictures. Villages become more scattered as you enter deeper into the region, life becomes more basic and the landscape more arid. You leave the valley today and climb steeply up to Chele home to a

number of ferocious Tibetan Mastiffs, thankfully chained to the village houses. You continue up on the side of a steep canyon to a pass after which you then descend on a pleasant trail to Samar, situated in a grove of Poplar trees.

Day 07: Trek to Geling (3510m) 5-6 hrs

We will start to ascend from Samar and in half an hour we reach a ridge which leading into a gorge and another valley full of juniper trees. We continue walking and cross the small river and reach the base of the Shyangmochen, a tiny settlement with a few local facilities. Near Shyangmochen is the Rangbyung which has stalagmites which look like small chortens, making it one of the most sacred places in whole Mustang. Climbing up is over for today as we gently get down to Geling, which has small population living in small mud houses. At the end of the day we should have walked around 5 hours.

Day 08: Trek to Ghami (3490m)5-6 hrs

We start a 5 hours walk to Ghami after breakfast. The walking duration seems short but is has lots of climbs making it difficult to catch pace. The climb begins steadily to the centre of the valley and then around to the head of the valley, to the Nyi La passes (3840m). After crossing the pass we, as previous day we will gently start walking down to reach Ghami, a large white-washed village sheltered by the overhanging cliffs.

Day 09: Trek to Charang (3620m) 5-6 hrs

The walk today is the hardest in the entire trip so make sure you have enough water and some power bars to Support you as we walk past the driest place in the Mustang area. The walk might be tiring and 5 hours might seem as long as 10 but still you can feel fresh with the view of the high mountains in the backdrops. At mid afternoon we will reach Charang, where at the eastern end a huge Dzong (fortress) and red gumpa home to a great collection of statues and thankas can be seen.

Day 10: Trek to Lo Manthang (3840m)5-6 hrs

You can explore Charang for sometime as we don't have a long walk today; it just lasts for 3 hours. We can have a leisurely breakfast, may be a lazy morning as well and then leave Charang and head up the valley to the boundary between Charang and Lo, the trail here broadens and soon you will catch sight of Lo Manthang, with only one entrance you will walk round to the North East corner to get in.

Day 11: Explore Lo Manthang

There are no rigid facts but it is said that this city was already in existence before 1390 and Ama Pal, was the person responsible for constructing this beautiful town in the cold desert. The last king of Lo Manthang was Jigme Dorje Palbar Bista (born c. 1933), and was the 25th King of Mustang from the Bista Dynasty. The people of Lo Manthang are known as Lhobas. The village is noted for its tall white washed mud brick walls, gompas and the Raja's or Royal or King's Palace, a nine-cornered, five story structures built around 1400. There are four major temples: Jampa Lhakhang or Jampa Gompa, the oldest, built in the early 15th century and also known as the "God house"; Thubten Gompa, a huge, red assembly hall and gompa built in the late 15th century and located just southwest of Jampa Gompa; Chodey Gompa, now the main city gompa; and the Choprang Gompa, which is popularly known as the "New Gompa". The Government opened access for tourist to this area after 1992, but still the tourism to Upper Mustang remains limited.

Day 12: Trek back to Ghami (3490m) 5-6 hrs

Today we start the second leg of the journey to get back to Jomsom. We take the same way back to Ghami. There are few alternate routes but very short ending up at the main trail in short span of time. Overnight stay at Ghami.

Day 13: Trek Ghami to Chuksang (2900m)5-6 hrs

We will reach Chuksang after crossing the Kaligandaki and walking past some desert like land area. After walking for around 6 hours we reach Chuksang for overnight stay.

Day 14: Trek Chuksang to Muktinath (3795m) 5-6 hrs

We start walking towards Muktinath today. You will travel through some pretty scenery today, apple orchards, agricultural fields and pretty villages. At the end of the day we can make a brief visit to the temple of Muktinath which is worshiped by Hindus as Lord Vishnu and By Buddhists as Avalokteshowrs. This temple premise has 108 stone spouts from where holy water comes throughout the day.

Day 15: Trek to Jomsom (5-6 hrs)

After the short descend in the morning you will find yourself in Jharkot and Khingar, where there are beautiful monasteries which give you the opportunity to witness the interrelation and similarity of Tibet to this area. The view of Dhaulagiri and Nilgiri is splendid throughout the trail. We will walk past Kagbeni to reach Jomsom along the bank of kali Gandaki River. We can spend some time exploring the headquarter of the mustang district, Jomsom from where the Mountain View is magnificent.

Day 16: Fly to Pokhara (20 minute)

Early morning flight to Pokhara. Rest of the day explore around Pokhara. You can do optional tour to Pokhara sightseeing.

Day 17: Drive back to Kathmandu (210 Km).6-7 hrs

After Breakfast scenic drive back to Kathmandu through the bank of the Trisuli river. Arrival in Kathmandu & transfer to Hotel.

Day 18: Warm Departure

Free for adequate personal activities till departure transfer from hotel to the International Airport.