

## Lower Dolpo Trek - 18 Days

The Lower Dolpo Trek is one of the most remote and untouched trekking adventures in Nepal. Located in western Nepal, this trek takes you through ancient Tibetan villages, deep valleys, high mountain passes, and the stunning turquoise waters of Phoksundo Lake. Unlike crowded trekking routes, Lower Dolpo offers peaceful trails, raw Himalayan scenery, and unique Tibetan-influenced culture.

This 18-day trek passes through Shey Phoksundo National Park and crosses two major passes: Numa La Pass at 5,190 meters and Baga La Pass at 5,070 meters. Along the route, you visit traditional villages like Dho Tarap and Ringmo Village, where ancient [Bon and Tibetan Buddhist traditions](#) are still alive.

The trek is moderate to challenging and is best suited for trekkers with good fitness and some high-altitude experience. With fewer crowds, remote camping trails, and dramatic mountain landscapes, the Lower Dolpo Trek offers a true wilderness experience in Nepal.

### LOWER DOLPO TREK OVERVIEW

The Lower Dolpo Trek is one of Nepal's best-kept secrets: a raw, remote wilderness adventure in the far western corner of the country that very few trekkers actually do. The region sits inside Shey Phoksundo National Park, the largest national park in Nepal, and it's a [restricted zone](#), which means you need special permits, and you need a registered guide. That also means the crowds never come.

The route takes you from Juphal through river gorges, past traditional Magar and Tibetan villages, up into the high plateau of [Dho Tarap Valley](#), over two serious mountain passes, and down to the jaw-dropping beauty of Phoksundo Lake before looping back out through Juphal. It's a classic camping circuit with some teahouse support along the way.

You'll cover about 130+ km of trail over 14 trekking days. The terrain is varied, everything from low river valleys to exposed high-altitude passes above 5,000m. The culture shifts dramatically as you gain altitude, moving from Magar communities in the lower valleys to fully Tibetan-influenced villages like Dho Tarap and Ringmo higher up.

Best suited for trekkers with prior high-altitude experience. Fitness and mental preparation matter here more than technical skill.

### WHY CHOOSE THE LOWER DOLPO TREK?

The Lower Dolpo Trek is one of the few remaining trekking experiences in Nepal where solitude, untouched wilderness, and authentic Himalayan culture come together in a single route. Very few trekking destinations in Nepal can still offer this combination, and that is precisely what makes it worth choosing.

- No crowded tea houses
- No long queues at checkpoints
- No trail that feels like a managed tourist corridor
- Deep river gorges

- High-altitude plateaus
- Barren pass crossings above 5,000 m
- Phoksundo Lake
- Bon religion actively practiced in villages like Dho Tarap
- Ancient monasteries that are lived-in, not museum pieces
- A way of life that has stayed largely unchanged for centuries
- Genuine immersion in local culture

The cultural depth, remote landscapes, and solitude make the Lower Dolpo Trek one of the most unique trekking experiences in Nepal.

***Ready to experience one of the most remote and untouched trekking regions in Nepal? Explore more hidden Himalayan adventures, expert-led expeditions, and authentic journeys across Dolpo with [Dolpo Caravan Treks](#).***

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## PRICE INCLUDES

- All domestic flights: Kathmandu - Nepalgunj - Juphal and return
- Lower Dolpo Restricted Area Permit (RAP)
- Shey Phoksundo National Park Entry Permit
- TIMS Card (Trekking Information Management System)
- Professional licensed trekking guide (English-speaking, local Dolpo guide)
- Experienced porters (1 porter per 2 trekkers)
- Full camping equipment: tents, sleeping mats, kitchen tent, and a dining tent
- All meals during the trek: breakfast, lunch, dinner (from Day 2 to Day 16)
- Teahouse accommodation where available (Dunai, Ringmo, Juphal)
- 3-star hotel accommodation in Kathmandu (Day 1 and Day 16 - 17)
- Airport transfers in Kathmandu and Nepalgunj
- Welcome dinner in Kathmandu
- First aid kit and emergency oxygen
- All government taxes and service charges

## PRICE EXCLUDES

- Nepal entry visa
- International airfare and excess baggage charge
- Travel insurance, rescue, and evacuation.
- Personal trekking gear and clothing
- Extra night accommodation in Kathmandu because of early arrival,
- late departure, early return from mountain (due to any reason) to the scheduled itinerary
- Alcoholic beverages and soft drinks
- Personal expenses (phone calls, laundry, bar bills, battery recharge, extra porters, bottle or boiled water, showers, etc.)
- Tips for guide and porters (strongly recommended, budgeting \$15 - 20 USD/day)

## ITINERARY IN DETAIL

### Day 1: Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu (1,400m / 4,593 ft)

You land at Tribhuvan International Airport. Our team picks you up and takes you to your hotel. We use clean, comfortable 3-star properties in Thamel. Once you've settled in, your guide meets you in the afternoon for a full trip briefing: gear check, route overview, permit paperwork, and what to expect. In the evening, have dinner together at a local restaurant.

- **Travel distance:** Tribhuvan International Airport to hotel ~6-8 km
- **Travel type:** Private Vehicle
- **Meals:** Dinner (Depending upon arrival time)
- **Accommodation:** Hotel in Kathmandu

### Day 2: Day 2: Fly Kathmandu to Nepalgunj (150m / 492 ft) | 50 min flight

A short one-hour domestic flight takes you from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj, the gateway city to western Nepal. It's a different world down here: hot, flat, and busy after the mountain air of Kathmandu. Check into your hotel, rest up, get an early dinner, and sleep early. Your flight to Juphal departs at first light.

- **Travel distance:** ~500 km by air
- **Travel type:** Domestic flight
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Hotel, Nepalgunj

### Day 3: Day 3: Nepalgunj to Juphal (2,499m / 7,874 ft), Trek to Dunai (2,150m / 7,054 ft) | 3 Hours

The Nepalgunj to Juphal flight is one of the most dramatic in Nepal. Thirty-five minutes in a small prop plane, climbing rapidly from the lowland heat into thin Himalayan air. You'll fly over ridgeline after ridgeline until the tiny Juphal airstrip appears on a narrow strip of hillside. It's a landing you'll remember.

Breakfast at the airport, then we start trekking down to Dunai for 2 to 3 hours along the Bheri River valley. Dunai is the administrative center of Dolpa District, a small but lively town with a few shops and local life happening on the main street. In the evening, the full team gathers for introductions.

- **Travel distance:** ~149 km by air, ~8 km trekking
- **Travel type:** Domestic flight + trekking
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse / Lodge, Dunai

### Day 4: Day 4: Dunai to Tarakot (2,900m / 9,514 ft) | 5 - 6 Hours

Today the trek begins properly. You follow the Bheri River upstream, moving through river gorges and past small settlements. The deep-cut valleys in this section are impressive, steep walls of rock closing in on both sides, the river loud below.

Tarakot sits at the head of the Kaike Valley and is home to the Magar people, who speak their own rare Kaike dialect, distinct from both Nepali and Tibetan. You'll see traditional stone-walled houses, prayer flags, and the occasional health post or police checkpoint that serves the local community. A fascinating introduction to the changing cultures of the Dolpo corridor.

- **Travel distance:** ~15 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Tented Camp

### **Day 5: Day 5: Tarakot to Laini Odar (3,350m / 11,056 ft) | 6 - 7 Hours**

A longer day with solid altitude gain. You leave the Kaike Valley behind and begin climbing into the Dho Tarap drainage: narrower trails, deeper forest, and the sound of a river echoing up steep gorge walls. The path winds through narrow rock passages in places, with some exposed sections that make you feel properly small against the landscape.

Laini Odar is a small settlement with a couple of basic teahouses and good camping spots beside a stream. The air is noticeably thinner up here. Worth slowing your pace, drinking more water than you think you need, and getting to sleep early.

- **Travel distance:** ~10 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Tented Camp

### **Day 6: Day 6: Laini Odar to Nawarpani (3,650m / 12,001 ft) | 5 - 6 Hours**

The trail today moves through more varied terrain, sometimes high on a ridge with open views, sometimes dropping back into the valley. You'll cross streams and push through brushy sections before the landscape starts to open up as you gain altitude. Small nomad encampments dot the hillsides, and you'll start seeing yaks.

Nawarpani is a small nomad camp used by herders who bring their animals to the high pastures in summer. A few seasonal teahouses operate here. After the day's walk, find a stream, take off your boots, and dip your feet.

- **Travel distance:** ~10 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Tented Camp

### **Day 7: Day 7: Nawarpani to Dho Tarap (4,100m / 13,451 ft) | 7 - 8 Hours**

The flat, wide valley floor of Dho Tarap comes into view long before you reach it, a huge surprise after days of narrow gorges and steep trails. The approach is along the Tarap River, and as you enter the valley, a massive white stupa carved with mantras welcomes you in.

Dho Tarap is one of the highest inhabited valleys in the world at around 4,100 m, and it's stunning. Tibetan stone houses, mani walls, Bon monasteries, and prayer flags everywhere. The local people, mostly of Tibetan origin, live a semi-nomadic pastoral life here. This is where the cultural immersion really starts.

- **Travel distance:** ~19 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Tented Camp

### **Day 8: Day 8: Rest & Acclimatization Day in Dho Tarap Valley**

At 4,100m, your body needs time to adjust before you push higher. But "rest day" here doesn't mean boring, Dho Tarap is endlessly interesting.

Spend the morning visiting Ribo Bumpa Monastery and the Bon gompa nearby, you can sit and watch monks go about their daily rituals, something that feels genuinely sacred rather than performed for tourists. Walk to the neighboring village of Tokyu, where traditional weaving and farming still happen in a totally unchanged way. Take photos. Write in your journal. Eat well. Drink lots of water. Talk to your guide about the next few days, the passes are coming, and it helps to know what's ahead.

- **Travel distance:** Short exploratory walks only
- **Travel type:** Acclimatization rest day
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Tented Camp

### **Day 9: Day 9: Dho Tarap to Numa La Base Camp (4,440m / 14,567 ft) | 4 - 5 Hours**

You leave the valley floor and start climbing toward the first big pass. The trail leaves Dho Tarap heading south through wide pastureland, following the Taksi River drainage before turning toward the Numa La. The landscape becomes more barren and dramatic as you gain altitude.

Numa La Base Camp sits at 4,440m, a high camping spot with sweeping views back over Dho Tarap Valley and the peaks beyond. It gets cold quickly after sunset up here. Have a good hot meal, check your gear for tomorrow's pass crossing, and get to sleep early.

- **Travel distance:** ~9.5 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Tented Camp

### **Day 10: Day 10: Numa La Base Camp to Danigar / Baga La Base Camp (4,500m / 14,764 ft), Crossing Numa La Pass (5,310m / 17,028 ft) | 6 - 7 Hours**

The climb to the pass is steep and steady, a couple of hours of hard uphill on loose scree and rock before the pass itself opens up. At the top, you're at 5,190m, surrounded by Himalayan giants. Kanjirowa Himal dominates to the west, and on a clear day you can see deep into Tibet. It's genuinely one of the stunning views in western Nepal.

Descent on the far side is long and knee-heavy, dropping almost 1,000 m to camp at Danigar, a small nomad camp used by Phoksundo herders during summer. Your legs will know about this day. Worth every step.

- **Travel distance:** ~11 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking (high pass crossing)
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Tented Camp

### **Day 11: Day 11: Danigar to Temche / Yak Kharkha (3,995m / 13,107 ft), Crossing Baga La Pass (5,169m / 16,634 ft) | 6 - 7 Hours**

Two passes in two days. This is the heart of the trek. Baga La is slightly lower than Numa La but no less dramatic. The climb starts early from Danigar, winding up through yak pasture land before hitting the final push to the pass. Views here look south toward the Dhaulagiri massif, on a clear morning, the light on those peaks is extraordinary.

The descent takes you down to Yak Kharkha (also called Temche), where the landscape softens again into wide meadows. You can already feel the Phoksundo drainage pulling you downward. Camp here for the night, the hardest two days of the trek are behind you.

- **Travel distance:** ~10.5 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking (high pass crossing)
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Tented Camp

### **Day 12: Day 12: Temche to Phoksundo Lake / Ringmo Village (3,610 m / 11,844 ft) | 3 - 4 Hours**

The trail descends steadily through the Phoksundo River valley, and then it just appears. Phoksundo Lake. Nothing prepares you for how blue it is. The lake sits in a bowl of cliff and forest at 3,611m, and it's one of the most beautiful things you'll see anywhere in Nepal. Possibly anywhere at all.

Ringmo Village sits on the lakeside, a small Tibetan community with a monastery, a few teahouses, and the kind of peaceful atmosphere that makes you want to stay longer than planned.

- **Travel distance:** ~8 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse, Ringmo / Phoksundo

### **Day 13: Day 13: Rest & Explore at Phoksundo Lake**

Take your time today. Walk around the lake shore. Visit the 9th-century Bon monastery above the village. Sit and watch the water change colour through the day. Talk to the locals. Your guide can take you on a short hike above the lake for an overview perspective that shows just how dramatically the lake sits in its landscape.

This is also a good day to dry out gear, charge devices (solar charging panels where available), and mentally process the fact that you just crossed two 5,000 m+ passes back-to-back. You earned this rest.

- **Travel distance:** Short exploratory walks only
- **Travel type:** Rest day
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse, Ringmo / Phoksundo

#### **Day 14: Day 14: Phoksundo Lake / Ringmo to Chhepka (2,950m / 9,678 ft) | 7 - 8 Hours**

Long day heading back toward the Juphal exit. The trail drops out of the Phoksundo Valley, descending through the stunning Phoksundo Gorge, like deep canyon walls, the river roaring below, and a trail that hugs the cliff face in places. Rope bridges, waterfalls, and constantly changing scenery make this one of the most exciting descent days of the whole trek.

Chhepka is a small settlement at the bottom of the gorge, with basic camping and a few simple teahouses.

- **Travel distance:** ~18 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Tented Camp / Teahouse

#### **Day 15: Day 15: Chhepka to Juphal (2,475m / 8,120 ft) | 6 - 7 Hours**

The final full trekking day. The trail follows the Suli Gad River back down to the valley floor, gradually opening up as you descend. The vegetation changes dramatically, from the barren high country to greener, lower terrain. You arrive back in Juphal feeling different from when you left. This is exactly how it should feel.

Celebrate with your team in the evening. Dinner together, stories from the trail.

- **Travel distance:** ~20 km
- **Travel type:** Trekking
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse / Lodge, Juphal

#### **Day 16: Day 16: Fly Juphal to Nepalgunj and from Nepalgunj to Kathmandu**

Early morning flight check-in. The flight back is just as dramatic in reverse, watching the mountains recede as you descend back to the lowlands. Connect in Nepalgunj for the onward flight to Kathmandu. Depending on arrival time, the afternoon is free for souvenir shopping or a final Kathmandu wander.

- **Travel distance:** ~500 km by air (total)
- **Travel type:** Domestic flights
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch
- **Accommodation:** 3-Star Hotel, Kathmandu

#### **Day 17: Day 17: Free Day in Kathmandu**

Reserved in case of flight delays due to mountain weather. If not needed, you can relax, shop, or explore heritage sites.

- **Travel Distance:** Local city travel as required
- **Travel Type:** Private Vehicle
- **Meals:** Breakfast
- **Accommodation:** Hotel in kathmandu

### **Day 18: Day 18: Departure from Kathmandu**

Transfer to Tribhuvan International Airport for your international departure. Our driver takes you to the airport for your international flight home. Safe travels and see you on the next one.

- **Travel Distance:** Hotel to Airport ~6-8 km
- **Travel Type:** Private Vehicle
- **Meals:** Breakfast (depending on flight time)

## FAQ

### 1. Can I visit Phoksundo Lake during the Lower Dolpo Trek?

Yes, the trek includes a visit to Shey Phoksundo Lake, one of Nepal's most beautiful turquoise lakes and a major highlight of the journey.

### 2. How remote is the Lower Dolpo Trek?

Lower Dolpo is one of Nepal's most remote trekking regions. There are no roads, limited phone signals, and only basic medical facilities in the area.

### 3. Are there teahouses on the Lower Dolpo Trek?

Some villages have basic teahouses, but most of the trek is camping-based due to the isolated terrain.

### 4. Is Lower Dolpo in Nepal's rain shadow area?

Yes, Lower Dolpo lies in the Himalayan rain shadow area, making it suitable for trekking even during the monsoon season.

### 5. Which mountain passes are crossed during the trek?

The Lower Dolpo Trek crosses Numa La Pass at 5,190 meters and Baga La Pass at 5,070 meters. These high passes offer spectacular mountain views and are the most challenging part of the trek.

### 6. Can I charge my phone during the Lower Dolpo trek?

Charging is available only in a few villages and usually costs extra. Carrying a power bank or solar charger is strongly recommended.

### 7. What food is available during the Lower Dolpo trek?

During the trek, we commonly serve dal bhat, noodle soups, rice dishes, potatoes, Tibetan bread, and simple camping meals.

### 8. What wildlife can I see in Lower Dolpo?

You may spot blue sheep, Himalayan griffon vultures, musk deer, foxes, and even snow leopard tracks inside Shey Phoksundo National Park.

### 9. How cold does it get during the Lower Dolpo trek?

During the Lower Dolpo trek, the temperatures can drop below  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$  at higher camps and mountain passes, especially at night.

### 10. Is Lower Dolpo Trek better than Upper Dolpo Trek?

The Lower Dolpo Trek is shorter, more affordable, and ideal for first-time trekkers in the Dolpo region. The Upper Dolpo Trek is longer, more remote, and pricier, but it offers deeper cultural experiences and wilder landscapes.

### 11. What is unique about Lower Dolpo culture?

Lower Dolpo preserves ancient Tibetan Buddhist and Bon traditions that are rare in other parts of Nepal. Trekkers can explore old monasteries, traditional villages, and Himalayan trading culture.

### **12. Are Juphal flights often delayed?**

Yes, flights to Juphal are frequently delayed or cancelled due to mountain weather conditions. It is best to keep extra buffer days in your Lower Dolpo trek itinerary.

### **13. Can the Lower Dolpo Trek be customized?**

Yes, the Lower Dolpo Trek itinerary can be customized based on your fitness level, travel dates, and trekking preferences. Many trekkers also combine it with Upper Dolpo Trek routes for a longer adventure.

### **14. How difficult is the Lower Dolpo Trek?**

The Lower Dolpo Trek is considered a moderate-to-challenging trek because of high-altitude passes and long trekking days. Previous high-altitude trekking experience and excellent fitness are highly recommended.

### **15. What is the highest altitude of the Lower Dolpo Trek?**

The highest point of the Lower Dolpo Trek is Numa La Pass at 5,190 meters. Trekkers cross this pass while traveling between Dho Tarap and Phoksundo Lake.

### **16. Is acclimatization necessary for the Lower Dolpo Trek?**

Yes, acclimatization is crucial during the Lower Dolpo Trek to prevent altitude sickness. Most itineraries include rest days to help trekkers adjust safely to the high elevation.

### **17. Can I combine Lower Dolpo Trek with Upper Dolpo Trek?**

Yes, many trekkers combine Lower Dolpo Trek with Upper Dolpo Trek for a complete Dolpo adventure. Combined itineraries usually take around 30 to 35 days to complete.