

Upper Dolpo Trek - 25 Days

The **Upper Dolpo Trek** is one of Nepal's most remote adventures, located far in western Nepal near the **Tibetan plateau**. This trek takes you well away from busy trails into a place where getting in is limited, villages are rare, and people still live as they have for hundreds of years. The land is open and wild, shaped by wind, high altitude, and being so far from other people, not by tourists.

This is a long, high-altitude trek where you camp all along the way. It's meant for trekkers who have experience and want remoteness, culture, and a challenge more than comfort. The trek usually lasts about three to four weeks, depending on the route and how you adjust to the altitude. Because it's tricky to organize, having a fully supported trek with trained guides, proper gear, and careful planning is really important for safety and for enjoying the trip.

Start planning your Upper Dolpo journey with [Dolpo Caravan Treks](#), a team that knows the region inside out.

UPPER DOLPO TREK OVERVIEW

The **Upper Dolpo Trek** follows a planned route through high valleys, river gorges, alpine plateaus, and several mountain passes. Starting from lower villages, the trail slowly climbs into the upper **Dolpo area**, with landscapes that feel more like Tibet than central Nepal.

The trek keeps changing, from narrow valleys carved by rivers to wide open highlands with mountains far away. A big part of the trip is the culture, with visits to traditional villages, chortens, mani walls, and monasteries that are important in local life. Since Upper Dolpo is a restricted area, only a few people can go there, which helps protect both the land and the local culture.

Explore the highlands and attractions, as well as the pathways through the [Upper Dolpo Trek Map](#).

WHY CHOOSE THE UPPER DOLPO TREK?

The **Upper Dolpo Trek** presents a new experience in possibly the most isolated and uncharted region of Nepal. Trekking will take place through harsh terrains, significantly through the wilderness, and over difficult passes such as the Kang La and Jeng La passes, all beneath great Himalayan giants. This region abounds with Tibetan Buddhism, and there are many monasteries, such as [Shey Gompa](#), which give visitors a glimpse of the old culture of people that still prevails even today.

One of the main attractions is [Phoksundo Lake](#) which has very clear water of an intense blue. Contrary to other well-known trekking areas, Dolpo is relatively untouched, meaning you can fully enjoy peace and serenity. Also, for wildlife lovers, the region offers [Snow Leopard](#) and Blue Sheep animals, which are very rare breeds. But it is a challenging trek that requires physical strength, so be prepared. This trek is usually a good route for experienced trekkers.

Recommended Read: [Best Treks in Dolpo](#)

PRICE INCLUDES

- 3-night hotel in Kathmandu on a bed-and-breakfast basis
- Domestic flights from Kathmandu - Nepalgunj and return airfare
- One expert trek leader with a local assistant
- All meals (the best and healthiest food in the local tea houses) And accommodations
- Trekking permit and national park fees
- Trekking equipment -Mattresses, Member tents, and Kitchen utensils.
- Three-time meals during a trek, along with Tea/coffee and snacks.
- Staff's salary, food, insurance, and clothing.
- Farewell dinner in Kathmandu.

PRICE EXCLUDES

- Nepal Visa
- International flights
- Personal expenses and meals in Kathmandu.
- Travel insurance (It's mandatory to have for Rescue and evacuation).
- Tips and gratitude for staff and guide.
- Donation and local entrance fee.
- Extra baggage weight on domestic flight
- Personal expenses like Alcohol, Local fabric, and Local monuments.

ITINERARY IN DETAIL

Day 1: Day 01: Arrival in Kathmandu (1,400 m / 4,593 ft)

Upon arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport, you are welcomed and transferred to your hotel in Kathmandu. After check-in, you have time to rest or take a short walk around the lively streets of Thamel.

In the evening, meet your trekking guide for a detailed briefing about the Upper Dolpo journey. Permits, gear, and logistics are reviewed to ensure everything is ready for departure.

- **Travel Distance:** Tribhuvan International Airport to hotel ~6–8 km
- **Travel Type:** Private Vehicle
- **Meals:** Dinner (depending on arrival time)
- **Accommodation:** Hotel

Day 2: Day 02: Flight to Nepalgunj (150 m / 492 ft)

Today you take a late afternoon flight to Nepalgunj in western Nepal. The landscape changes dramatically as you descend from the hills to the flat Terai region. Nepalgunj has a warmer climate and a different cultural feel compared to Kathmandu.

After hotel check-in, the team prepares for the early morning mountain flight to Juphal.

- **Travel Distance:** Kathmandu to Nepalgunj ~365 km (by air)
- **Travel Type:** Domestic Flight + Private Transfer
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Hotel

Day 3: Day 03: Flight to Juphal (2,475 m / 8,120 ft) & Trek to Kageni (2,800 m / 9,186 ft)

An early morning scenic flight takes you to Juphal, the gateway to Dolpo. From the air, you see deep valleys and rugged mountain terrain. The trek begins with a gradual descent toward the Thuli Bheri River before following riverside trails.

You pass small villages and cultivated fields, getting your first real taste of rural Dolpo life before reaching Kageni for overnight camp.

- **Travel Distance:** Flight ~145 km | Trek ~8–9 km
- **Travel Type:** Flight + Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 4: Day 04: Trek to Rechi (3,000 m / 9,843 ft)

The trail follows a mix of riverbanks and forested sections with steady elevation gain. Suspension bridges connect small settlements along the way. You begin to feel the remoteness of the region as traffic disappears and the landscape becomes quieter. The day ends at Rechi, a peaceful stop surrounded by hills and farmland.

- **Travel Distance:** ~10–12 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 5: Day 05: Trek to Shey Phoksundo Lake / Ringmo (3,611 m / 11,847 ft)

Today you enter the protected area of Shey Phoksundo National Park. The trail climbs through pine forests and narrow cliffside paths before revealing the stunning turquoise waters of Phoksundo Lake.

The view feels almost unreal, like a hidden jewel in the mountains. You camp near Ringmo village, a traditional settlement influenced by Tibetan culture.

- **Travel Distance:** ~12–14 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 6: Day 06: Rest Day at Shey Phoksundo Lake (3,611 m / 11,847 ft)

This acclimatization day allows your body to adjust to the altitude. You explore Ringmo village and visit the ancient Bon Gumpa overlooking the lake. The Bon religion is older than Tibetan Buddhism and still practiced here.

Short hikes around the lakeside help improve acclimatization while offering incredible scenery.

- **Travel Distance:** 3–5 km (exploration walks)
- **Travel Type:** Short Hike
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 7: Day 07: Trek to Lakey Dunga / Rugla (4,200 m / 13,779 ft)

Leaving the lake behind, the trail becomes more rugged and less traveled. You follow narrow paths carved into rocky slopes with dramatic views of deep valleys. Vegetation begins to thin as you gain altitude. The environment shifts toward a dry, high-altitude landscape as you reach Lakey Dunga.

- **Travel Distance:** ~10–11 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 8: Day 08: Trek to Nagdalo High Camp (4,700 m / 15,420 ft)

Today's trek is more demanding as you climb steadily toward high camp. The terrain becomes barren and windswept, typical of the trans-Himalayan region. Camps are set in open alpine terrain with wide mountain views.

Early rest is important in preparation for crossing the high pass tomorrow.

- **Travel Distance:** ~8–10 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 9: Day 09: Trek to Shey Gompa (4,343 m / 14,248 ft) via Nagdalo Pass (5,350 m / 17,552 ft)

You start early to cross Nagdalo Pass at 5,350 meters. The climb is steady but rewarding, offering panoramic Himalayan views at the top. After enjoying the scenery, you descend carefully toward Shey Gompa.

This ancient monastery is one of the most sacred sites in Dolpo and a major spiritual highlight of the trek.

- **Travel Distance:** ~12–13 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek (High Pass Crossing)
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 10: Day 10: Rest Day at Shey Gompa (4,343 m / 14,248 ft)

Today is for exploration and cultural immersion. You hike to Tsakang Gompa, perched dramatically on a hillside above the valley. The monastery holds deep religious significance and offers stunning views.

The rest of the day is spent exploring the surroundings and learning about local traditions.

- **Travel Distance:** 4–6 km (round trip hike)
- **Travel Type:** Hike
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 11: Day 11: Trek to Namgung (4,430 m / 14,534 ft)

The trail moves across dry ridges and wide valleys shaped by wind and time. The landscape feels open and vast, with scattered settlements along the way. Namgung village sits beneath rocky cliffs and features an old monastery worth visiting.

- **Travel Distance:** ~10–12 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 12: Day 12: Trek to Saldang (3,770 m / 12,369 ft)

This is a relatively moderate walking day across open plateau terrain. The path is less steep but exposed to sun and wind. Saldang is one of the largest villages in Upper Dolpo and an important trade center with strong Tibetan cultural roots.

- **Travel Distance:** ~10–11 km

- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 13: Day 13: Trek to Komagaon (4,060 m / 13,320 ft)

The route follows dry valleys and remote trails used by traders and locals. You see traditional stone houses and prayer walls along the way. The sense of isolation increases as you move deeper into Upper Dolpo's heartland.

- **Travel Distance:** ~11–12 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 14: Day 14: Trek to Shimengaon (3,850 m / 12,631 ft)

A gradual descent leads through agricultural fields and scattered villages. The terrain feels calmer compared to previous high passes. Shimengaon is quiet and peaceful, offering insight into daily mountain life.

- **Travel Distance:** ~12 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 15: Day 15: Trek to Tingue Village (4,150 m / 13,615 ft)

The trail climbs again through rugged terrain and dry hillsides. You may encounter yak caravans carrying goods across remote routes. Tingue is a small settlement often used by traders and herders.

- **Travel Distance:** ~12–13 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 16: Day 16: Trek to Yak Kharka (4,700 m / 15,420 ft)

You enter high pasture land used seasonally for grazing yaks and livestock. The environment is open and windswept with very little vegetation. Camps are set in alpine meadows surrounded by dramatic mountain backdrops.

- **Travel Distance:** ~9–10 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 17: Day 17: Trek to Dho (4,090 m / 13,418 ft) via Chhoila La (5,040 m / 16,535 ft)

Another high pass crossing awaits at Chhoila La. The ascent is steady and demanding but manageable with a good pace. After crossing the pass, you descend into the beautiful Tarap Valley and reach Dho village.

- **Travel Distance:** ~14–15 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek (High Pass Crossing)
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 18: Day 18: Rest Day at Dho (4,090 m / 13,418 ft)

A full acclimatization and cultural day in Tarap Valley. You explore monasteries and traditional homes. The valley is wide and scenic, offering a different feel from the high barren ridges.

- **Travel Distance:** 3–5 km (local walks)
- **Travel Type:** Short Hike
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 19: Day 19: Trek to Nawarpani (3,545 m / 11,631 ft)

The trail descends through narrow gorges and river valleys. The walking becomes easier as altitude drops. Forest sections begin to reappear.

- **Travel Distance:** ~12–14 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 20: Day 20: Trek to Lasicap (2,775 m / 9,104 ft)

Continue descending along riverside trails and through wooded sections. The air becomes thicker and warmer as you lose elevation.

- **Travel Distance:** ~12–13 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 21: Day 21: Trek to Dunai (2,140 m / 7,021 ft)

Reach Dunai, the district headquarters of Dolpo. After days in remote villages, Dunai feels lively and connected. This marks the end of the remote Upper Dolpo section.

- **Travel Distance:** ~14 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 22: Day 22: Trek to Juphal (2,475 m / 8,120 ft)

A final gradual walk back to Juphal along familiar trails. You reflect on the journey through one of Nepal's most remote regions.

- **Travel Distance:** ~8–9 km
- **Travel Type:** Trek
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Camping

Day 23: Day 23: Flight to Kathmandu (1,400 m / 4,593 ft)

Early morning flight to Nepalgunj and onward to Kathmandu. Transfer to your hotel and enjoy a comfortable evening in the city.

- **Travel Distance:** Juphal to Nepalgunj ~145 km | Nepalgunj to Kathmandu ~365 km
- **Travel Type:** Domestic Flights + Private Transfer
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner
- **Accommodation:** Hotel

Day 24: Day 24: Buffer Day in Kathmandu (1,400 m / 4,593 ft)

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

Day 25: Day 25: Departure from Kathmandu (1,400 m / 4,593 ft)

Transfer to the airport for your international departure, marking the end of your Upper Dolpo adventure.

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

FAQ

1. How difficult is the Upper Dolpo Trek?

The Upper Dolpo Trek is considered a strenuous trek due to its long duration, high altitudes, and rugged terrain. Experience in trekking and good physical fitness are essential.

2. What is the best time to trek Upper Dolpo?

The best time to trek is during spring (April to June) and autumn (September to November) when the skies are clear and the weather is stable. This is because the high passes have little to no snowfall during these warmer months.

3. What is the accommodation like on the trek?

Basic accommodation is usually provided in tents or teahouses. Prepare for simple living arrangements as there aren't many facilities, just shared rooms and basic toilets, but they're enough for hikers' needs.

Some hikers decide to camp, but this means carrying your own cooking supplies and camping equipment.

4. Are there any cultural or religious sites to visit during the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Indeed, the Upper Dolpo Trek includes several religious and cultural attractions, such as the Shey Gumpa and Crystal Mountain. These websites provide an opportunity to learn about the Dolpo region's Tibetan Buddhist spirituality and culture.

5. What kind of physical preparation is needed for the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Due to the physical demands of the Upper Dolpo Trek, physical preparation is essential before starting the adventure. Exercises like jogging, weightlifting, and trekking can be used for both strength and cardio training. Before undertaking the Upper Dolpo Trek, it's crucial to increase your endurance by going on shorter climbs or treks.

6. Why is Dolpo famous?

Dolpa, also known as Dolpo, is famous for its remote and unspoiled natural beauty, rich Tibetan Buddhist culture, and challenging trekking routes. It features stunning landscapes like Shey Phoksundo Lake, ancient monasteries such as Shey Gumpa, and diverse wildlife within Shey Phoksundo National Park. The region's isolation has preserved its unique traditions and lifestyles, making it a captivating destination for adventurous trekkers and cultural enthusiasts.

7. What is the height of Upper Dolpo?

Upper Dolpo reaches its maximum height at Kang La Pass, which stands at 5,350 meters (17,552 feet) above sea level, presenting a significant challenge and remarkable views for trekkers exploring this remote region of Nepal.

8. Do I need a special permit for the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Yes, trekkers need a Restricted Area Permit for Dolpo, along with a Shey Phoksundo National Park permit and TIMS card.

9. Can I do the trek solo or without a guide?

Due to the restricted nature of the Dolpo region, trekkers must be accompanied by a registered guide, and it is not permitted to trek solo.

10. Is altitude sickness a concern on the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Yes, due to the high altitudes reached on this trek, altitude sickness can be a concern. It's important to acclimatize properly and listen to your body during the trek.

11. Is the Upper Dolpo Trek worth the high permit cost?

Yes, the permit cost reflects the restricted status of the region and helps protect its culture and environment. For trekkers seeking true remoteness and cultural depth, the experience often justifies the expense.

12. How remote is Upper Dolpo compared to Mustang or Manaslu?

Upper Dolpo is significantly more remote, with fewer settlements and no lodge infrastructure. Once on the trail, access to roads and services is extremely limited.

13. Can the Upper Dolpo Trek be done without camping?

No, camping is required as there are no reliable lodges throughout the route. A full camping setup is essential for accommodation and meals.

14. How many days are spent above 4,000 meters on this trek?

A significant portion of the trek is above 4,000 meters, often lasting more than a week. This is why acclimatization days are built into the itinerary.

15. What kind of emergency support is available in Upper Dolpo?

Emergency support includes trained guides, communication systems, and evacuation planning. However, response times can be longer due to the region's remoteness.

16. Are there charging facilities or electricity during the trek?

Electricity is very limited and unreliable. Most trekkers rely on power banks or solar chargers.

17. Is a mobile network or the internet available in Upper Dolpo?

Mobile networks are mostly unavailable once you enter Upper Dolpo. Internet access should not be expected during the trek.

18. What happens if flights to or from Dolpo are delayed?

Delays are common due to the weather. Itineraries are planned with buffer days, and flexibility is important.

19. Can solo trekkers join a group for the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Yes, solo trekkers can often join scheduled group departures to share costs and logistics.

20. How much cash should I carry for the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Cash needs are limited but should cover personal expenses, tips, and travel days. Your operator can advise on a reasonable amount before departure.