

Helambu Trek

Nepal, a spectacular 5 day trek through the Helambu region



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Nepal Trekking

An incredible 5-day trek through the Helambu region

Lying some 72 kilometres north-east of Kathmandu, the Helambu region, or Helmu as it is also known, consists of the country situated at the head of the Malemchi Khola (river). Bounded to the north by a wall of 5000 metre peaks which divide it from the Langtang Valley, it extends north-west to the Gosainkund Lakes and east towards the lower slopes of the Jugal Himal.

The Helambu region is particularly rewarding in the Spring when the rhododendrons are in full bloom. Although the region is not endowed with some of the better known Himalayan giants, the peaks of the Langtang, Jugal and Ganesh Himal form a very impressive backdrop to what is a charmingly unspoilt and often, un-trekking area. Indeed, the people, country and views of the Helambu will come as a surprise to many in an area comparatively close to the Kathmandu Valley.



Detailed itinerary

Day 1: Depart London to Kathmandu

Overnight flight from London Heathrow to Kathmandu, Nepal.

Day 2: Kathmandu

We arrive in Kathmandu mid afternoon and transfer to the Summit Hotel. The hotel is situated on a hillside and there are great views from the terrace looking across the city and to the Himalaya in the distance.

Day 3: Kathmandu to Sundarijal to Chisso Pani

6hrs trekking

We make an early start from Kathmandu for the 45 minute drive to the starting point of the trek at Sundarijal. Shortly into the trek we pass the Buddhist Stupa at Boudanath—it is always a good idea to walk to the left for good luck and prosperity. From Sundarijal the trail climbs steeply up to the ridge line bordering the northern side of the Kathmandu valley. Crossing the ridge via a small pass at Bunlang we drop down to the small village of Chisopani where we camp at 2215m.

Day 4: Chisopani to Gul Bhanjang

6-7hrs trekking

There is an option of a short trek to the top of the hill above the campsite where there are fine early morning views to the west including Makalu, Peak 29 and Boudha Himal. From here, the day starts with a steep descent to the village of Pati Bhanjang (pass) where we stop for a short rest before another steep climb up through the village of Chipling where we break for lunch.

This afternoon our ascent continues until we reach the shoulder of Jogin Danda (hill). The trail now levels off traversing through rhododendron and mixed forest (fine flowering shrubs and orchids in the spring) until a gradual descent to the camp site at Gul Bhanjang at 2130m.



Day 5: Gul Bhanjana to Ichok

7hrs trekking

We pass through the village of Gul bhanjang, after a steep but fairly short climb we emerge in a great Alpine type meadow with excellent view of the Jugal himal to the north. From here it is a short distance to Kutumsang where we stop for lunch. After lunch the trail makes a big traversing loop under the slopes of Hille danda, passing through a mix of forest and farm land.

Today we will see as we move further away from Kathmandu the Sherpa influence becomes more noticeable. They are primarily farmers although a little trade still flourishes, and for whatever reason have not taken to the trekking and mountaineering business for which their cousins from the Solu Khumbu are so famous. We camp outside the small hamlet of Ichok at 2200m.

Detailed itinerary

Day 6: Ichok to Tarkeghyang

7 hrs trekking

This morning's trek starts with a tough four hour descent all the way down to the Melamchi river. Depending on the time of year the lunch spot is a good place for a swim for those hardy enough to take to the water. After lunch we have to regain much of the height lost during the morning and it is a three hour steep walk up to the large Sherpa village of Tarkeghyang. The climb will be broken by visiting the impressive Gompa (temple) at Nakotegoan.

Tarkeghyang at 2,270m is the largest of the villages in Helambu and where we will be camping tonight. It has an interesting Gompa and it is well worth taking a stroll around the narrow alleys where the buildings are of a distinctly Sherpa style.



Day 7: Tarkeghyang to Thimbu to Kathmandu

3-4 hrs trekking

This morning we start by heading south, losing height as we leave the hills behind us. The character of the landscape and the people changes back to that of the lower foothills. Passing through several Bahun and Chettri villages we make a final descent to the end trek point at Thimbu where we meet our vehicles and start our 4 to 5 hour drive back to Kathmandu.

Day 8: Kathmandu to London

A chance to explore Kathmandu. Day flight or overnight flight back to London.

Day 9: Arrive London if on overnight flight

Challenge grade

Moderate-tough

Best time of year

January, February, early March, November and December

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This itinerary is complex and subject to change

