**DAGALA AND THE THOUSAND LAKES TREK**

Trekking from Punakha to Thimphu, along ancient trails and amid high alpine lakes in Bhutan

- Sensational Himalayan views crossing the Sinchu La (3530m) and Dagala range (4520m)
- Trek the Valley of a ‘Thousand Lakes’, a beautiful area full of pristine mountain lakes
- Get off-the-beaten-track and follow ancient trade routes few other visitors have trodden
- One of the finest short treks in the entire Himalayan range
- Visit the Tiger’s Nest Monastery and Punakha Dzong, the most iconic sites in Bhutan

**Bhutan, Trek & Walk, 13 Days**

6 nights camping, 6 nights hotel, 12 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 12 dinners, max group size: 16, 9 days trekking, 4 days cultural touring, max altitude - 4520 metres

**VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE**

www.keadventure.com

UK: +44(0) 17687 73966

US (toll-free): 1-888-630-4415
Introduction

Starting in the original Bhutanese capital of Punakha, this superb new trekking holiday begins by following the ancient trading route to Thimphu over the Sinchu La (3530m). Until the road building programme of the late 20th century, the only access between the valleys of Punakha and Thimphu was across the ridges and passes connecting these two important valleys. The second section of our trek takes us up and across the Dagala range, including the Laba Chung Laptsa (4520m) from where we will have a stunning perspective on the Eastern Himalaya and then traverses the 'Valley of a Thousand Lakes', before we end our holiday in the modern capital of Bhutan, Thimphu. Very few visitors to Bhutan have followed this route and when KE founder Glenn Rowley made this trek in November 2016, he saw no one else at all. Glenn's opinion of the trek: "I've completed many short treks in the Himalaya but the view from the Dagala range, which reaches from Chomolhari (7314m) in the west to Gangkar Puensum (7570m) in the east, is one of the best in Bhutan, you can literally see every peak. The lack of other trekkers, pristine campsites, the feeling of remoteness whilst being only a few days away from civilisation, the beautiful Dzongs, and contact with welcoming Bhutanese people, made this trip extra special for me".

BOOK EARLY for BHUTAN! With only two airlines operating flights into Paro from Kathmandu, seats are limited and in high demand. Book early to guarantee your place on your chosen departure. We strongly advise booking a year in advance where possible.

Is this holiday for you?

This trek is suitable for regular hill walkers. On our 8 day trek we will for the most part be following trails that have been well prepared for the ponies or yaks that were traditionally used to carry supplies on the route. The trekking does involve some long days of 6-7hr with the occasional longer day. We will be crossing several passes over 4000m and will also encounter long ascents and/or descents on some days, so a good level of fitness is essential. Remember that the moderately high altitude will make the walking feel more demanding than at lower elevations. Our hike up the Tiger's Nest at 3100m will be great acclimatisation before starting our trek. During the trek we will encounter a variety of terrain; from fertile and intensively terraced farmland, through some of the finest mixed forest in the world, to open, alpine pastureland and high mountain valleys and passes. This is a fully supported trek, and you will only be required to carry your day pack each day. Our friendly camp crew will take care of all the camp chores, so you can relax, rest, and enjoy the views at camp.

Holiday Itinerary

Day 1: Meet at the group hotel in Kathmandu. Transfers from Kathmandu Airport are provided.

Arriving in Kathmandu you will be met outside the arrivals hall by a local KE representative who will arrange the transfer to the group hotel in the heart of the city; they will also supply you with a copy of your Bhutanese Visa, your ticket to Paro and details of the timings and where to meet the group the for the transfer back to the airport the following morning. The hotel is only a short walk from Thamel and flight time allowing you may have time for some independent sightseeing. We have also arranged for dinner in the hotel tonight, which you can take at your own leisure. KE Land Only package services begin with the airport transfer.

Day 2: Fly to Paro in the Kingdom of Bhutan. Sightseeing Paro.
After taking breakfast in the hotel, the group will meet in the lobby at a designated time and transfer together back to the airport in Kathmandu to check in for our flight to Paro, Bhutan. The flight from Kathmandu to Bhutan is one of the most spectacular of all mountain flights. From the left side of the plane Everest, Makalu and Kangchenjunga, three of the world's highest mountains, are clearly visible. The total flying time is only 45 minutes and soon we are descending into the Paro Valley, enjoying the splendid views of alpine forests, small monasteries, temples and flat-roofed farmhouses. Arriving in Paro we are met by our Bhutanese hosts and transfer to our hotel. depending on flight times there may be an opportunity to visit the impressive Ta Dzong and the ancient watchtower above, which now houses the National Museum.

**Day 3: Hike to the Taktsang (the Tiger's Nest) Monastery. Drive to Punakha.**

This morning we make the stunning hike up to one of the most important religious site in the entire Himalaya, the Tiger's Nest. The monastery has a most stunning location, perched on the ledge of a cliff 900m above the Paro Valley. Not just a cultural experience, this hike up to over 3000m will provide some excellent acclimatisation ahead of our trek. Around half way up the trail there is a classic viewpoint for Taktsang, looking across the gorge to the monastic buildings clinging to the cliff wall opposite. There is a small teahouse located here where we can stop for a rest and a drink with a truly unforgettable view. The final approach to the monastery takes us down to a sacred waterfall, surrounded by a thousand fluttering prayer flags, where every crack in the rock is crammed with tsa-tsas (small caskets containing the ashes of the dead), before climbing back up towards the monastery. Leaving our bags and cameras at the gate we should hopefully be allowed to take a look around inside. As we explore amongst the chambers and altar rooms our guide will be on hand to explain all about the Buddhist rituals and iconography. We return to Paro in the afternoon. Arriving in Punaka we can expect warmer temperatures and a change of scenery towards fertile farmland, fruit trees and rice paddies. In the late afternoon we will visit Punakha Dzong, one of Bhutan's most impressive buildings; it was here that the first king was crowned in 1907 and also where the current, and fifth, King first donned the Raven Crown. Particularly impressive is the pillared hall, which is decorated with art work depicting the most important scenes from the life of the Buddha and presided over by impressive giant gilded statues of Buddha, Guru Rinpoche and Zhabdrung Rinpoche (or Bluebeard). After visiting the dzong we will check into our hotel. If there is any luggage that do not require on the trek we can can leave a separate bag with the driver for delivery to our hotel in Thimphu to collect at the end of the trek.

**Day 4: Walk through forests of blue pine and rhododendron to Dupshipang (2440m)**

After breakfast, we drive to Chorten Nyebu (1700m), the site of an ancient temple and here we meet our trek crew and horsemen who will accompany us over the next days. The trek today is a gradual ascent which begins through terraces of rice. We pass several villages and as we gain height we can look back over the valley below where we can also see the golden roofed Khamsum Yuley chorten, which was built by the Queen Mother. After crossing two streams and climbing steadily through forests of blue pine and rhododendrons, we reach a clearing, which is our camp for the night at the place known as Dupshipang (2440m).

**Day 5: Trek over Sinchu La (3530m) and down towards our camp in a meadow (3485m).**
We continue climbing steadily through mixed forest towards the Sinchu La. The view begins to open up and we can see Thinleygang village, Talo Monastery and the main road to Punakha. After approximately 4-Shours we reach the Sinchu La (3530m), marked with a small Stupa and many prayer flags. The trail across the top of the pass has been worn to a deep groove by generations of travellers between Punakha and the villages that now form Thimphu. These days most Bhutanese make the journey by road, thus bequeathing an excellent quiet trekking path to those who appreciate walking in the foothills of the Himalaya. From the top of the pass if the weather permits, we have extensive views over the Thimphu Valley and Phajoding Monastery and of distant Himalayan Mountain ranges. The old 'Winter' route between Punakha and Thimphu now aims directly for the capital, whereas we trend left heading towards our next pass to continue our adventure. From the top of the Sinchu La we descend to our camp in a meadow (3485m), surrounded by rhododendron and mixed conifer forest.

Day 6: Today we trek to the Dochu La (3100m).

Today's trek, which leads us down towards the Dochu La on the Punakha/Thimpu road, is relatively gentle with some occasional uphill climbing through dense forests of oak and blue pine with frequent dramatic clearings where we have extensive views over Thimphu city. Much of the walk is along old and disused logging trails which makes for relatively easy underfoot conditions. We will also pass some semi-nomadic Yak herders' winter settlements. This is also another opportunity to enjoy the amazing panorama of snow-capped Himalayan peaks and admire the 108 'Druk Wangyal' chortens. We camp around an hour on from the main road at a camp that offers great views of the Himalayas.

Day 7: Across the Hele La (3225m) to our camp near the settlement of Chamgang (2600m).

From camp we should be treated to a stunning view of the sunrise. Today we begin with an uphill walk of around 2 hours to the remote Lungcheytsey Temple (3570m). From here we descend through the forest of pine and dwarf rhododendron, before heading up once more towards the Hele La (3225m). We will stop for lunch near the pass before descending down towards our camp, around an hour away from the small hamlet of Chamgang (2600m). Chamang is populated by highlanders who have relocated form the highlands of the Daga La to avoid the harsh winters.

Day 8: To Tsokam (3200m). Trekking through apple orchards and mixed forest.

Today we trek for around an hour to reach Chamgang village, from here our path first leads up through orchards of apples, before a long gradual climb takes us through forests of spruce, birch, juniper, oak and rhododendron. The forests are full of wild life with many species of birds and are also known for the many varieties of blue poppy found here. Our camp tonight is in a clearing known as Tsokam (3200m), which means 'dried lake'. This is a winter meadow used to graze the Yaks when the herders bring them down from the higher mountain slopes.

Day 9: Trek across the Tsa Rila La (4190m) to Lhaba Chung (4300m).
We have a steep climb for about an hour to start the day, after which we ascend more gradually beside the Dokka Chu, where we are likely to see the tents of semi-nomadic Yak herders. On this route Himalayan Monal Pheasants are a common sighting and we have fantastic views of the Himalaya as we climb over several ridges to reach the Tsari La (4190m). Eventually we reach a steep ravine and stream across which the locals have now built a concrete bridge. Crossing the bridge, we then ascend for around another hour to our camp site at Lhaba Chung (4300m).

Tonight’s camp is just below a lake and has been used for centuries by the yak herders as their summer grazing grounds.

Day 10: Across the Laba Chung Laptsa (4520m) and trek to Watachen (4100m).

On today’s hike we will have fantastic views of the Himalaya. One we reach the Laba Chung Lapsta, a classic saddle mountain at 4520m, the extensive panorama will include distant Kanchenjunga as well as the Bhutanese peaks of Masang Gang, Gangchhenta, Tsenda Gang and Jichu Drake. For an even better view those with energy to spare can climb a further 200 metres above the saddle to a small summit. From the saddle our path descends. We take a detour from the main path ascending to visit the lakes, the Chage Tsho, Sertsho and Yu Tsho (Tsho = lake). This is a beautiful area containing many alpine lakes and tarns in numerous valleys, although the epithet of a ‘Thousand Lakes’ is more poetry than arithmetic. From the lakes, we follow the emerging stream downhill for a while to the main Labatama Valley where there are scattered yak herders' huts. In the springtime this is a flower-strewn meadow with fragrant wild asparagus filling the air. Our next camp is nearby the herder’s huts at Watachen (4100m).

Day 11: Across the Pangalabtsa (4200m), trek through 'mushroom' country to Genekha and drive to Thimphu (2400m).

We now traverse around the head of the valley to the Pangalabtsa, a pass at 4250m adorned with a huge cairn and prayer flags. Here there is an excellent view over the entire Dagala range and most of the Bhutanese Eastern Himalayan peaks. From the pass we make a long gradual descent, crossing several side valleys and their streams, to reach a rocky outcrop where the vegetation changes from spruce and larch to tall blue pine. We now follow a broad trail down the ridge to the Yak pastures of Gur (3290m), from where we have a gradual descent through forests alive with birdsong to a superb viewpoint in the form of a huge rock platform. The villages of this region derive significant income from the harvesting of matsutake and chanterelle mushrooms that grow wild in the forests. In the season mushrooms from this valley are sold all over Bhutan. Below the viewpoint our descent becomes steeper as we follow a well-crafted ancient trail with steps down to the Dolongu Chu, which we cross on a rustic bridge. Following the stream downhill we reach the Geynitsang Chu and continue following this river north to a suspension bridge. On the other side a short climb brings us to the village of Genekha where our vehicle will be waiting to drive us the 40kms to our hotel in Thimphu. After checking in and taking a welcome hot shower we will go out to explore Bhutan’s capital city.

Day 12: Fly to Kathmandu. Overnight Kathmandu.

We have an early transfer to Paro Airport for the morning flight to Kathmandu. The flight takes only 45 minutes and on arrival we transfer to our comfortable hotel. The remainder of the day is free to explore the city or for...
shopping in the bazaars. An evening meal is included at the hotel, for those that wish to dine together, or you are free to head out into Thamel independently to a restaurant of your choice.

Day 13: Departure day. Transfers to Kathmandu Airport are provided.

KE Land Only package services end after breakfast. Transfers to Kathmandu airport are provided. There are many interesting extensions that can easily be added to your holiday. Why not pre-book a simple full day-tour in the Kathmandu Valley, or a multi-day excursion to the wildlife reserve at Chitwan. Contact the KE office for more details.

Holiday Information

What's Included

• A professional and qualified tour leader plus support crew
• Bhutan visa fee
• Flights between Kathmandu and Paro
• All transfers and land transport involved in the itinerary
• All accommodation as described
• All meals
• Full service camping on trek including all camping equipment
• 'Thermarest' inflatable camping mats whilst camping
• FREE Sleeping bag and down jacket hire is available for this holiday on request

What's Not Included

• Travel insurance
• Nepalese visa costs
• Tips for drivers and trek staff
• Miscellaneous expenses - beer and souvenirs etc

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the group hotel in Kathmandu. Airport transfers are provided for all clients arriving Kathmandu on Day 1 and departing on Day 13 of the itinerary and all clients with additional nights booked through KE. Hotel contact details and an emergency telephone number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are included in the holiday price from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on the final day of the Land Only itinerary.

Food & Water
The Bhutanese love chillies; red, green, raw, cooked and flavouring their condiments – fans of spicy food will be in their element in Bhutan! Don't panic if spicy food is not for you, all the hotels and restaurants in Thimpu and Paro offer a range of delicious dishes suitable for all tastes. Breakfasts whilst in hotels will consist of choice of cereal or muesli, eggs, toast, beans, sausage or bacon with tea, coffee and juices.

You can expect to be fed very well during the trekking section of your holiday. Our trekking chefs are old hands at managing camps and meals whilst in the mountains. A senior trek cook and camp manager must have a minimum of five years of training and experience to qualify for the post! Our cooks have undergone training both on Bhutanese and continental dishes and can expect to be served a wide variety of delicious food on trek. Breakfast and dinner will be taken at the camp sites, whilst lunches will generally be carried on ponies and served mid-way on the trekking route for the day. Tea and hot drinks will be provided throughout the day and you will also usually also get a wakeup call from the camp crew with a nice cup of hot Chai! Whilst on trek drinking water will be purified by boiling and will be provided regularly.

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a Water-To-Go bottle) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot provide special diets. Due to the nature of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

This holiday has 2 nights in Kathmandu, one en route to Bhutan and one on the return journey. In Kathmandu we use a comfortable, centrally located hotel. In Bhutan, we will also use comfortable and well located hotels in Paro, Thimphu and Punakha.

Whilst on trek there will be a total of 7 nights full service camping where you will enjoy a full-service from our friendly camp crew. You will sleep in hardy 2 man dome tents and inflatable Thermarest mattresses are provided.

All the camp equipment and luggage will be transported between camps by ponies or yaks, you need only carry your day pack. Our camp crew will erect and dismantle the tents for you, cook, and take care of all the camp chores.

During walking days, having stayed behind to collapse camp, it is usual for the crew and the pack animals to overtake the group during the day and you will usually arrive into camp to find it already established, with your personal bags already placed into your pre-assigned tents and the kettle on!

In camp, as well as the tents used for sleeping, there will also be a mess tent, with chairs and tables, where the group will dine (and socialise into the evening), a toilet tent and even a shower tent where a bucket of hot water can be provided for you to wash with. Hot water for washing will also be provided to you in the mornings and when you arrive at the camp each day. On cold nights we’ll even provide hot water bags/bottles to keep you warm.
when it is time for you to retreat to your tents for the evening.

All accommodation is allocated on a twin sharing basis. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Depending on availability it is normally possible to book single accommodation. It is also possible to book extra nights in Kathmandu if you plan to arrive early or depart later than the group trip dates (subject to availability).

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be met and escorted in Kathmandu by a local KE representative. Once in Bhutan the group will be accompanied throughout by a professional and qualified tour leader.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to very high altitude. During the course of your trip you will be spending at least one night above 4000 metres and/or trekking to 5000 metres or above. This is not something that you should worry about; the human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of altitudes, but it is important that we follow some simple rules in order to acclimatise successfully. Before coming on this holiday you should read the advice on trekking at high altitude. Unless you have previous experience of trekking above 4000 metres you should consult one of our trekking experts before embarking on this holiday. On this trip we carry a portable altitude chamber (PAC-bag) and/or bottled oxygen for use in emergencies.

Spending Money

Approximately £250 (or equivalent US dollars, Euros etc.) changed to local currency, should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses including approximately £50 - 70 for tips to local staff. We recommend that you carry your travel money in the form of cash, since you will exchange the majority of this on arrival. On arrival in Kathmandu you will only need a small amount of Nepalese rupees for drinks in the evening and we suggest that you change £10 or £20 at your hotel. When you arrive in Paro you will be able to change money at the airport into Bhutanese Ngultrum. Sterling, US Dollars and Euros are all equally acceptable for exchange in Nepal and in Bhutan. If you are intending to buy expensive souvenirs, you should budget accordingly (credit cards can be useful in this respect). Also, if you expect to buy considerable quantities of soft drinks or beer, you should make an allowance for this. You can withdraw cash from ATMs in Kathmandu. In Bhutan money can be easily exchanged but you cannot rely on withdrawing money from ATM's.

Guidance On Tipping

Tips are the accepted way of saying ‘thank you’ to your local staff. They do not form part of their wages. KE always pays local crews the best rates of pay, no matter what country they are in and any tips they receive are seen as a personal thank you from group members. For our part, we advise local teams that tips are not a duty or a prerequisite but are a bonus and entirely dependent on the service that was given. For your trek crews we recommend that you give a tip if you feel that their services have met your satisfaction. We recommend that you decide the level of tipping and present these from the group as a whole rather than individually. As a rough guide we suggest each group member contributes around £50 - 70 (in equivalent local currency) to a pool for tipping.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, which should be a soft duffel bag and a daypack. Your bag on trek will be carried by porters or pack animals and should not weigh more than 15kg. It is possible to leave
extra baggage at the hotel in Kathmandu and also in Paro. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

Recommended Outdoor Retailers

Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from Cotswold Outdoor - our 'Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 15% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers. 

>> Find out more

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

General Information

Passport & Visas

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required for visits to countries outside the EU. The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. Please check the relevant embassy or consulate for other nationalities. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Visa requirements and charges are subject to change without notice. If you are travelling outside the EU you should have at least 2 blank pages in your passport for each country that you visit.

Visa information is changing all the time. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel.

Visa Bhutan

All nationalities require a visa. KE will apply for the visa for you. The visa fee is included in your holiday cost. We require copy of the information page of your passport in order to make the arrangements for your Bhutanese visa. A colour scan must be emailed or posted to us at the earliest opportunity.

Visa Nepal

All nationalities require a visa and this can be obtained on arrival at Kathmandu Airport. The visa process is automated and this includes having your photograph taken. The visa fee is $30 for 15 days, $50 for 30 days, $125 for 90 days. The visa is FREE for children under 10 years. The visa allows multiple re-entry. Payment must be made
in cash and USD, GBP or Euros are accepted. Whilst these are not now needed for the visa process, we recommend that you travel with at least 2 spare passport photographs.

You can avoid the queue for the first stage of the visa process on arrival at Kathmandu Airport by printing off this application form and completing it before you travel (you will need to attach one passport photograph to this form). If you travel with this form you can go directly to the cashier to pay for your visa.

Health & Vaccinations

Severe Allergies

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as ‘adrenaline auto-injectors’ are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella, along with hepatitis A and typhoid.

Malarial prophylaxis is not usually required for trips in the mountains, however if you are visiting rural and remote low lying areas then they might be necessary. On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dentist check up. A good online resource is Travel Health Pro.

Dengue Fever

Dengue fever is a known risk in places visited. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Currency

The unit of currency in Bhutan is the Bhutanese Ngultrum.

The unit of currency in Nepal is the Nepalese Rupee.

Electricity Supply & Plug

We recommend you check if you require an adaptor for your electrical items at:

http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets/

Preparing For Your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience.

The walking on this holiday is not overly demanding and ascents are mostly gradual, but walking at altitude especially over 3000 metres makes its own demands on the body. You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 5 to 7 hours for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardiovascular fitness and stamina.
Climate

In general the climate of Bhutan is damper than one would expect to find in the Himalaya of India or Nepal. The monsoon usually arrives in June, and lasts until the end of September, bringing with it the heavy rainfall which is responsible for the lush vegetation which carpets much of Bhutan. The months either side of the monsoon offer the best conditions for a visit to Bhutan. Post-monsoon (October / November) generally brings the most stable weather with predominantly sunny days. It should be remembered however that this is the Himalaya and rainfall, snow and even short-lived storms can occur at any time of the year. At the time of year of this departure we can expect day-time highs of around 20°C at altitudes around 2000 metres.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign & Commonwealth Offices’ 'Travel Aware' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use. We have pledged to AITO’s Project Protect that 70% of our agents stop using single use plastic bottles.

Books

- Bhutan, Land of the Thunder Dragon. Owen Edmunds.

Maps

Bhutan Himalaya. 1:380 000. ITMB Publishing

ITMB publish a general road map which also shows the general relief and has an index of towns and major villages. There are also sections for Thimpu and Paro with detailed street plans.
Flight Information

Flight Inclusive Or Land Only?

On our website we display a UK Flight Inclusive package price and Land Only package price for the majority of our holidays.

Flight Inclusive Notes

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Kathmandu. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the evening, arriving mid afternoon the following day (day 1 of the itinerary). Return flights will depart Kathmandu usually in the morning of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later the same day. Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Please be aware that there are often only a limited number of seats available at the advertised price. To avoid paying flight supplements, we recommend that you book as early as possible, especially during peak times. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures, we will contact you with an alternative quote. Please note that you may be asked to pay for your flights in advance of your final holiday balance. Note that if you book a package including flights with KE you will benefit from full financial protection.

Land Only Notes

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary joining in Kathmandu on the dates shown above. For clients making their own flight arrangements, Kathmandu Airport is the most convenient for transfers to the group hotel. Please refer to the 'Joining arrangements & transfers', for further details.

Flights SHOULD NOT be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Why Choose KE Adventure Travel?

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Operating since 1984, KE Adventure Travel has some of the most experienced staff in the business, with the proven ability to set up and operate a worldwide programme of adventures. Everyone has adventure travel at heart and joins at least one trip a year. It is this depth of experience that makes KE stand out from other adventure travel operators. When you contact KE, by phone or e-mail, or visit our office, you will find the help and advice you need, from someone who has actually done the trip and can give you the benefit of their first-hand experience.

KE can guarantee the very best in trip support, excellent food, a good standard of hotel and other accommodation, plus the back up of one of the most respected companies in the business. Client satisfaction is at the top of our agenda and almost 50% of our bookings each year come from repeat business. If you are looking for adventure then look no further than KE.

Group Tour Leaders

All of our holidays are accompanied by an experienced leader, some of whom have worked with KE groups for many years. Many are professional guides and instructors with an unrivalled knowledge of the areas in which they work. In many parts of the world, we recruit local guides with appropriate training and experience. In addition to having the technical skills to ensure your safety, KE expects its leaders to be active members of the group. A leader should be fun to travel with and ready to share with you their enthusiasm for adventure travel and their

www.keadventure.com  UK: +44(0) 17687 73966  US (toll-free): 1-888-630-4415
knowledge of the area. Alongside the group leader, there will be a local support crew, which could be just a driver, or a complete team of guides, drivers, porters, mule-herders and cooks. The hard work of our support crews, along with the fascinating insight they can offer into their local culture, is integral to providing you with the very best adventure travel experience.

Sustainable Tourism

Since we ran our first trip in 1984, we have been committed to keeping the world's most beautiful places pristine by minimising our environmental impact. Recognising the fragility of the world's wilderness environments, we keep our groups small and operate according to a 'Mountain Code', which is provided to all groups, trek leaders, agents and staff. We make sure that our local staff are well treated and well paid, we respect indigenous cultures, take care to protect the environment of the places we visit and take every opportunity to make a positive contribution wherever we travel. Our philosophy of 'leaving nothing but footprints' has been integral to KE's approach right from the start over 30 years ago. In recognition of our efforts we are proud to have achieved the highest award of 5 Stars for Sustainable Tourism by AITO.

We continue to travel responsibly, and more information on our policy, practice, and specific projects can be found at www.keadventure.com, and on the website of our partner charity the Juniper Trust: www.junipertrust.co.uk. KE's Mountain Code is issued to our staff, trek leaders and overseas agents, and we recommend it to our clients, too!

Booking Your Holiday

The easiest way to make your booking is online. You will need to pay a deposit at the time of booking. This is normally £200 but for some holidays with special permit fees or internal flights, this may be more. The amount of deposit required for an individual holiday is given on the dates and prices page of the holiday. Late bookings will require full payment. We cannot confirm any booking until we receive your fully completed booking form.

Adventure Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our trips that you are insured against medical and personal accident risks (to include repatriation costs, air ambulance and helicopter rescue services). We also strongly recommend that you take out holiday cancellation insurance, as all deposits paid are non-refundable. Please ensure that your insurer is aware of your KE Adventure itinerary and can agree to cover the activities being undertaken. You will then need to advise us of your policy details and complete an Insurance Declaration Form.

CAMPBELL IRVINE DIRECT travel insurance is available to EU residents and will cover the majority of KE Adventure holidays. It has been designed to provide cover for activities normally excluded by other insurers such as trekking, mountain biking and climbing. Please note that certain activities may attract a higher premium. In addition 'Campbell Irvine Direct' cannot provide cover for KE climbing trips above 6000m. Cover for these can be obtained through either the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) or Snowcard.

TRAVELEX is a USA based insurer offering travel insurance, which can be used by US citizens and US residents only. KE recommends the "Travelex Select" package for our holidays. If your holiday involves using mountaineering equipment (ropes, harness or crampons), for climbing or glacial travel, you should consider the "Adventure Plus Pak" optional upgrade on the Travelex Select Plan. Please refer to the 'Description of Coverage' for a summary of the terms, conditions, exclusions and limitations of the applicable Protection Plan. This policy will also cover KE climbing trips above 6000m.
Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

The packed weight of your kit bag while trekking should be no more than 15kg.

You Must Bring The Following Items:

- Sleeping Bag (Comfort rating -10°C)*
- Warm jacket (down)*
- Hiking boots
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Lightweight waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer shirts
- Casual shirt and/or T-shirts
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Gloves or mittens
- Daypack 25 - 30 litres
- Headtorch with spare batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottles 1 Litre x2 (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial handwash
- Small towel
- Selection of dry bags (to keep kit bag contents dry)
- Small padlock (to lock your kit bag)
• Basic First Aid Kit including: Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium) painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

The Following Items Are Optional:
• Trainers or similar
• Gaiters
• Spare laces
• Thermal baselayer leggings
• Scarf or neck buff
• Sleeping bag liner
• Swimwear (for the hotel pool in Kathmandu)
• Travel clothes
• Trekking poles
• Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
• Repair kit – (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
• Camera
• Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Notes

*FREE sleeping bag and down jacket hire is included in your KE holiday booking upon request.

Please make all requests at least 6 weeks prior to the trip departure date. Note all hire / rental equipment is issued in Bhutan. Please remember to allow room in your trek bag for these items.

‘Thermarest’ inflatable camping mats are provided whilst camping.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 13 Jul 2020, and the trip is subject to change.