DAGA LA AND THE THOUSAND LAKES TREK

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

- Sensational Himalayan views crossing the Sinchu La (3530m) and Daga La (4520m)
- Cross Bhutan's Valley of the 'Thousand Lakes'
- Follow ancient trade routes, where few other visitors have trodden
- Visit the Takstang Monastery and Punakha Dzong, the most iconic sites in Bhutan

HOLIDAY CODE BSD

Bhutan, Trek & Walk, 13 Days

7 nights camping, 5 nights hotel, 12 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 12 dinners, max group size: 16, 7 days trekking, 4 days cultural touring, max altitude - 4520metres

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

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**Introduction**

Starting in the original Bhutanese capital of Punakha, this superb new trekking holiday begins by following the ancient trading route to Thimpu 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 Daga La (4520m) with 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 director 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 Daga La, 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?**

Trekking conditions on this trek are reasonably straightforward, since for the most part we are 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 - 7 hours and we cross three passes over 4000 metres, so a good level of fitness is essential. 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. The trek should be suitable for regular hill or back-country walkers.

**Holiday Itinerary**

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

Arriving in Kathmandu we are 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. KE Land Only package services begin with this transfer. Depending on flight times there may be time to look around the area of Thamel before rendezvousing with the group for dinner, where you will also be given information on timings for tomorrow's flight to Bhutan.

**Day 2: Fly to Paro in the Kingdom of Bhutan.**

We have a leisurely morning in Kathmandu, then transfer to the airport for the Druk Air flight to Bhutan's main international airport at Paro. 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.

ACCOMMODATION  HOTEL  MEALS BLD

Day 3: Drive to Punakha (1500m) and visit the Dzong

This morning we set out for Punakha. The drive starts along the winding road following the Pa Chu (river) downstream to its confluence with the Wang Chu, then up-valley to Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan. As we enter the Thimphu Valley we pass Simtokha fortress monastery (dzong), the oldest in the country built in 1629 by Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal (the man who unified Bhutan). From Thimphu we continue our journey eastwards climbing out of the valley to the Dochu La where in good weather, almost 200 miles of the Himalayan range can be viewed in one sweeping panorama. While taking in the view, we will enjoy a picnic lunch near the 108 stupas built by the Queen Mother of Bhutan. After lunch at the pass, we descend a winding road and experience the dramatic change in vegetation as we drop down to lower altitudes. Rhododendron and juniper give way to tall pines and oaks before we enter a subtropical region of cactus, poinsettia and banana plants. After a few hours, we come to the green terraced fields of Punakha Valley, where red rice and winter wheat are the staple crops. Punakha was the capital of the country until 1961 when the newly built Thimphu took over the role and the Je Khempo, head abbot of the Drukpa school of Tibetan Buddhism, along with most of the monks from Thimphu move back here for the winter to enjoy the milder climate. We will visit the impressive Punakha Dzong, strategically located at the confluence of the Mo and Po Chus (mother and father rivers), guarding the northern and southern approaches to the valley. This dzong, which was built in 1647, contains the remains of Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal. After visiting the dzong we will continue to a camp beside the river.

ACCOMMODATION  CAMPING  MEALS BLD

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).

ACCOMMODATION  CAMPING  MEALS BLD  TIME 5 - 6 HRS TREKKING HOURS

Day 5: Trek over Sinchu La (3530m) to Glenn Karkha (2800m)

We continue climbing steadily though 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 3 - 4 hours 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 giants. 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 for approximately 2 hours to reach the grazing meadow of Glenn Karkha (2800m) where we make our camp.
Day 6: Today we trek across Dochu La (3100m) to Chamgang (2600m)

Today's trek 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. Our trail today crosses the Punakha / Thimphu road at the Dochu La (3100m). We passed this way on our journey to Punakha and this is another opportunity to enjoy the amazing panorama of snow-capped Himalayan peaks and admire the 108 'Druk Wangyal' chortens. From the top of the pass we have a further two hours hiking, descending through the pines and oak forest to reach our camp at Chamgang (2600m).

Day 7: To Tsokam (3200m). Trekking through apple orchards and mixed forest.

The day begins amongst apple orchards and then we have a long gradual climb 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 8: Trek across the Daga La (4520m) to Labatama (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 Daga La, a classic mountain saddle at 4520m. The extensive panorama includes 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, passing Dala Tsho (Tsho = lake) and some Yak herder huts to reach our next camp Labatama (4300m). 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. Our camp tonight is right beside one of the lakes, Utsho, which in the season, is famous for its golden trout.

Day 9: Across the Pangalabtsa (4250m) and trek to Gur (3290m)

From the lake, we follow the emerging stream downhill for a while to the main Labatama Valley where there are scattered herders' huts to take advantage of the excellent grazing. In the springtime this is a flower-strewn meadow with fragrant wild asparagus filling the air. 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), where we make our final camp of the trek.

**Day 10: Trek through ‘mushroom’ country to Genekha and drive to Thimphu (2400m.)**

On our final day of trekking, we will make an early start to reach the trailhead at Genekha. We begin with 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 11: Drive to Paro and visit the Tiger’s Nest**

This morning we drive the 55km from Thimphu to Paro. The road follows the Wang Chu downstream, passing through small towns and villages and crossing several side valleys to reach a confluence with the Paro Chu which we then follow upstream to Paro. Upon arrival, we will make an excursion to Taktsang Lhakhang, the Tiger’s Nest, one of the most recognised and important religious sites in the entire Himalaya. This iconic monastery, clinging to a vertical granite cliff 2000 feet above the valley floor, dates from 1692 and was built around the cave where the Guru Rinpoche was said to have meditated for 3 years, 3 months, 3 weeks, 3 days and 3 hours. According to legend the Rinpoche arrived at this spot in the wrathful form of Guru Dorji Droloe on the back of a flying tiger and subdued the evil spirits of the region, which then became protectors of the dharma. One in particular, called Singye Samdrup, is recognized as the principal guardian of Taktsang. The Tiger’s Nest is only accessible on foot. Arriving at the trailhead we follow an uphill path and after one hour, we reach a small teahouse with a fantastic views of the monastery which is directly opposite on the other side of a gorge. In a further half-hour of climbing the path leads to the temple itself and depending on events taking place there it may be possible to look inside although it is not always possible to do so. For those who do not wish to go all the way to the temple, the teahouse is the perfect place to sit and relax and admire one of the most amazing views you will ever have. Upon returning to Paro, we can relax at our hotel or do some last minute shopping in town. Tonight we will enjoy a ‘farewell to Bhutan’ dinner to celebrate our journey through the Land of the Thunder Dragon.

**Day 12: Fly to Kathmandu.**

We have an early transfer to Paro Airport to catch the morning flight to Kathmandu. The flight takes only 45 minutes and on arrival we transfer to our comfortable hotel. As part of the holiday package we have arranged an optional sightseeing tour which will visit two or three major sites of interest in Kathmandu such as the great stupa at Bodhnath and the temple to Shiva on the ghats of the Bagmati River at Pashupatinath. In the evening, we will have a celebratory meal in one of the city’s finest restaurants. Overnigh at our Kathmandu hotel.
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

- An experienced English-speaking local guide plus support crew
- Kathmandu Airport transfers
- Bhutan flights and transfers
- Bhutan visa fees
- All accommodation as described
- All meals
- All land transport involved in the itinerary
- A guided sightseeing tour of Kathmandu
- Full service camping on trek including all equipment (excluding personal equipment)
- Inflatable sleeping mat while camping

#### What's Not Included

- Travel insurance
- Nepalese visa costs
- Tips for drivers and trek staff
- Departure taxes on leaving Bhutan
- Miscellaneous expenses - beer and souvenirs etc

#### 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

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.

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.

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.

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

A professional English-speaking local leader will accompany the group in Bhutan. During the trek the leader will be assisted by a support crew including camp assistants, cooks and baggage animals and their handlers.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to high altitude. During the course of your trip you will reach altitudes in excess of 3500 metres. 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. You can also talk to one of our trekking experts if you have any concerns about altitude.

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.

Free KE Gift

We give you a free gift as a way to thank all our clients who book a KE holiday. Choose from KE T-shirts, buffs, KE trek bags* (where applicable) plus many more. Alternatively you can choose to make a £10 donation to the Juniper Trust Charity. You can make your selection in your My KE account after booking.

* A free KE trek bag is available on this holiday. Delivery outside of the UK will be charged.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, which should be a soft bag such as the KE kit 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.
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 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. The visa fee is $25 for 15 days, $40 for 30 days, $100 for 90 days and is obtainable on arrival. Payment must be made in cash and USD, GBP or Euros are accepted. You will require 2 passport photos. Children under 10 yrs do require a visa but is it free of charge.

Health & 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 is a known risk in places visited. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes, like malaria. 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

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on an active holiday getting some additional exercise. 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 also comfortable with walking up to 6 or 7 hours each day over several days. We would suggest that you adopt a weekly exercise regime. Regular walking in mountain or hill country is the best preparation but any regular exercise will be good for developing better stamina. Before departure, we suggest that you try to fit in a number of long walks in hilly country.

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](http://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](http://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.

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.

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 (Heathrow) 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'.

Flight Options From The US

For help and advice with booking your flights, we recommend you consult our friends at Exito Travel, airfare specialists since 1994. The air team at Exito are familiar with our destinations and know the airports, best airlines and potential pitfalls. If there is ever a flight change, cancellation or air-related issue before or during your travels, it’s nice to know you have someone on the Exito air team looking after you. Visit their website at: www.exitotravel.com or contact the team on: keadventure@exitotravel.com &/or via phone at: 800.655.4053 ext. 8507.

Why Choose KE Adventure Travel?

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Experience

KE has 31 years experience of adventure travel worldwide. 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 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.

The team of KE office staff is amongst the most experienced in the business, with the proven ability to set up and operate a worldwide programme of adventures. Every one 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 trek support, excellent food, a good standard of hotel and camp 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.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AND AWARDS

Responsible Tourism has always fitted naturally with KEs travel ethic. It is important to us that our clients are not the only beneficiaries of the travel experience, but that we share a two-way relationship with the areas that we visit. We make sure that our local staff are well treated and well paid, we respect indigenous cultures, take care to protect the environment and make the most of every opportunity to make a positive contribution wherever we travel.

In addition to holding an AITO 5-star Sustainable Tourism rating, we are recipients of AITO’s Achievement in Sustainable Tourism Award in recognition of the work carried out over the past 20 years, giving back to the communities and areas we visit. We have been awarded Highly Commended status in the Best Tour Operator category of the Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards, and were named Best Trekking Operator on Earth by National Geographic Magazine, whose criteria included commitment to responsible tourism.

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. KEs Mountain Code is issued to our staff, trek leaders and overseas agents, and we recommend it to our clients, too!

Your Complete Financial Protection

KE Adventure Travel is a fully licensed and bonded tour operator. We are a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO), bonded with the CAA (ATOL 2808) and ABTA licensed (W4341). You can book your trip with KE Adventure Travel in complete confidence that all monies you pay for a trip are fully protected.

BOOKING YOUR HOLIDAY

Making a Booking

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

IMPORTANT - 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
We hope that this trip notes has answered most of your questions. Please feel free to contact us and speak to one of our experts.

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.

You Must Bring The Following Items:

• Hiking boots
• Socks
• Trekking trousers
• Lightweight waterproof overtrousers
• Underwear
• Baselayer shirts
• Casual shirt and/or T-shirts
• Fleece jacket or warm jumper
• Waterproof jacket
• Warm jacket (down)*
• 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
• Washbag and toiletries
• Antibacterial handwash
• Small towel
• Selection of dry bags (to keep trek bag contents dry)
• Small padlock (to lock your KE trek bag)
• Sleeping Bag (Comfort rating -10°C)*
• 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

Notes

* denotes items available for hire through KE Adventure Travel

'Thermarest' inflatable camping mats are provided

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

Please note: This document was downloaded on 3 Nov 2017, and the trip is subject to change.