



Kanchenjunga South Trek

Trek Description

Kanchenjunga (8598m) is on the border between Nepal and the Indian state of Sikkim. The Kanchenjunga is the world's third highest mountain, and the first ascent was made in 1956. This region is home to the Limbus, who are relatives of the Rais. They are thought to have ruled the Kathmandu valley from the 7th century BC until around 300 AD. They then moved into the steep hill country of eastern Nepal, from the Arun valley to the Sikkim border, where they remain today. They are easily distinguishable by their Mongolian features. Many of the men still carry a large kukri (traditional curved knife) tucked into their belt and wear a topi (Nepali hat). A famous contribution of Limbu culture is the drink tongba. A wooden pot is filled with fermented seeds and boiling water. You drink the potent mixture through a bamboo straw, with tiny filters to keep the seeds out.

Highlights of the trek

Visiting Middle Hill villages inhabited by Rai and Limbu people, close-up views of Kanchenjunga, camping in one of the unspoiled areas of eastern Nepal.

Detailed itinerary

Itinerary can be customized according to your needs and length of stay.

Day 01 – Arrival in Kathmandu

Upon arrival at Kathmandu International Airport transfer to your hotel. Short briefing will follow concerning the necessary formalities and your trekking itinerary. Depending upon your arrival time you may spend free time visiting nearby sanctuaries or resting.

Day 02 – Sightseeing / Cultural Day in Kathmandu Valley

Half day sightseeing around Kathmandu where your guide will escort you on a tour of Buddhist and Hindu temples and shrines reflecting ancient local traditions. There is time to explore the city's many places of interest on your own or take a rest while trekking permits are finalised. In the evening sample a delicious traditional Nepali dinner. Overnight in Kathmandu.

Trek details

Trek dates

Daily

Season

September to end of November and early February to late June

Duration

18 days

Trekking days

14

Trekking grade

Medium

Maximum altitude

4620m

Starting point of trek

Suketar

Finishing point of trek

Suketar

Trek style (accommodation)

Camping

Trek code

EN1

Day 03 – Suketar to Tembewa (1880m)

After arriving on the airport in Suketar (2400m) we follow a gradually climbing trail along the rhododendron covered Surke Danda. The trail crosses a ridge at 2580m and then descends through the forests to the substantial Limbu village of Tembewa (5 hrs).

Day 04 – Tembewa to Khesewa (1960m)

Today the trail first ascends to a ridge before dropping steeply through Shimu and Pokara villages to a suspension bridge across the Phawa Khola river, where there is a good swimming place. We then will climb steeply to the Limbu village of Kunjari at 1700 meter and continue through wheat fields to a Gurung settlement on a 2240 meter high pass. From here we have our first views of Kanchenjunga. The trek now enters the Kabeli valley where we spend the next two days climbing up and down, in and out of ravines and over ridges to arrive at Yamphudin. Today's endpoint is in the scattered village of Khesewa (6 hrs).



Kanchenjunga

Day 05 – Khesewa to Mamanke (1780m)

Our trek continues through the Kabeli valley passing a few spectacular waterfalls. After descending steeply through rice terraces into a side canyon we cross the Khaksewa Khola river on a long suspension bridge at 1540 meter and then climb back to Mamanke. This is a prosperous Limbu village with bhattis (teashops), shops and a large school (6 hrs).

Day 06 – Mamanke to Yamphudin (1690m)

This day will bring us a lot of jumping from stone to stone as we first have to cross the Tenguwa Khola stream. We then climb steeply up to a ridge marked by a chorten (Buddhist monument) and prayer flags. Going down from here to the Kabeli Khola will be another exercise of rock-hopping over boulders, tree roots and intersecting stream channels as we head upstream. We then climb gently to Yamphudin, which is a mixed community of Sherpas, Limbus, Rais, and Gurungs (4 hrs).



Prayer Flags

Day 07 – Yamphudin to Amji Khola (2340m)

After crossing the Amji Khola river we will leave this river for now and continue our way on a trail that heads straight uphill through fields of corn and barley to Dhupi Banjyang, a pass at 2540 meter. We then descent through ferns surrounded by big trees to the Amji Khola river, where we will find a camp site (5 hrs).

Day 08 – Amji Khola to Torontan (2990m)

From the stream the trail makes a steep climb through bamboo forests to Chitre at 2920 meter. After arriving here the ascent is less strenuous passing through a forest of pines and rhododendron to a pond at Lamite Bhanjyang (3410m). From this ridge we follow a steep set of switchbacks leading downhill through damp orchid-filled forests, crossing streams and isolated clearings used by herders. We stay above the wild river and follow it upstream to Torontan, where there are a few campsites close to the river or a little further ahead near a few caves (6 hrs).

Day 09 – Torontan to Tseram (3870m)

The hike starts in forests of several varieties of rhododendron and the crosses landslides to Tsento Kang, a goth (a cowshed or hut in a high pasture) at 3360 meter. About an hour beyond is a Buddhist shrine decorated with rock cairns, prayer flags and three-pronged iron trisuls (the trident weapon of Shiva). This shrine is in a small cave and marks the boundary of a sacred part of the valley, beyond which killing animals is prohibited. We continue our way to Tseram, a large flat meadow with a single house at 3870 meter that doubles as a rustic lodge. The settlements in this valley are Goths used by yak and cow herders (5 hrs).

Day 10 – Tseram to Ramche (4620m)

A rocky loose path follows the stream and climbs up to some mani walls (stones carved with Buddhist prayers). Rathong (6678m) and Kabru Dome (6700m) loom at the head of the valley. Climbing further alongside the moraine of Yalung Glacier to where the valley opens up as we approach Yalung at 4260m. Our trek climbs further along the moraine to a lake and a big meadow at Ramche. There are two well build houses here; one of them thinks it's a hotel, but the owner spends so much time away that it rarely fulfils its ambitions. The view is dominated by the spectacular peak of Rathong. Herds of blue sheep live on the cliffs above our campsite (4 hrs).



Peak of Rathong

Day 11 – Day trip to Yalung Glacier; return to Ramche

Today we make a day trip to the Yalung Glacier following a stream alongside the moraine to a chorten at 4800 meter. From here we have a fine view of the south face of Kanchenjunga (8598m) and Jannu (7710m). We then retrace our steps back to our campsite at Ramche (6 hrs).

Day 12 – Ramche to Lamite Bhanjyang (3410m)

We follow our way back along the Simbua Khola (days 6 and 7 in opposite direction) to a campsite at Lamite Bhanjyang. This is a pond at 3410 meter which is a nice place to camp, although there might be a water shortage here (7 hrs).

Day 13 – Lamite Bhanjyang to Yamphudin (1690m)

The 1920 meter descent of today brings us back to the more inhabited familiar area of Yamphudin (5 hrs).

Day 14 – Yamphudin to Phumphe (1780m)

We follow the Kabeli Khola river back to Phumphe village, retracing our steps of days 3 and 4 (5–6 hrs).

Day 15 – Phumphe to Kunjari (1700m)

Leaving the Kabeli valley and our last views of Kanchenjunga we go to the Limbu village of Kunjari, following the route of day 2 and 3 in reverse (7 hrs).

Day 16 – Kunjari to Suketar (2400m)

Today we make the long return to Suketar. As the flights leaving from here operate early in the morning we will have to spend the night here in a hotel which specializes in tongba (the local alcoholic specialty).

Day 17 – Suketar to Kathmandu

Our early morning flight brings us back to Kathmandu
Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 18 – Kathmandu

Departure from Kathmandu.

The trek program is – because of weather or unforeseen events – subject to change.

■ Services & costs included in price

- Airport pick-up and drop-off
- Three night's
- Hotel accommodation and breakfast in Kathmandu
- Licensed and trained trekking guides
- Porters for carrying goods and supplies
- All accommodation during the trek
- All meals, mineral water on trek and hot beverages
- Transportation to and from trailhead
- All necessary documents and permits for trekking (where applicable)
- National Park/Conservation Area entry permit
- Equipment such as sleeping bag, tents and mattresses
- Cooking equipment
- Camp-site charges
- Insurance, medication, and equipment for staff
- Coordination of Quick Rescue service (costs covered by your Insurance plan)

■ Services & costs NOT included in price

- International airfares
- Travel/trekking insurance
- Excess baggage charges more than 16kg and hand bag more than 5 kg in domestic flights
- Visa fees
- Airport departure tax
- Rescue charge
- Drinks (Cold & Alcoholic)
- Expenses of personal nature
- Permit & Liaison officer fee (where applicable)