



# Dunai Phoksumdo Lake via Do Tarap Trek (Upper Dolpo)

## Trek Description

This trek takes place in the north-west region of Nepal. Dolpo is located in the Phoksundo National park of mid-western Nepal, behind the Dhaulagiri massif, towards the Tibetan plateau, cut off by a series of very high passes and closed by the snow most of the year. As it is one of the remotest and least exposed areas of Nepal, and also naturally isolated by the difficult topography, it offers rare opportunities to explore near-virgin territory and meet people, almost unexposed to tourism. Because Dolpo is so close to Tibet's border, the people of Tibetan origin inhabit it. The trek provides chances to visit several unique monasteries (gompas).

## Highlights of the trek

Villages inhabited by Bon and Buddhist settlers, Phoksumdo Lake.

## 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.

### Day 03 – Kathmandu to Nepaljung

Fly to Nepaljung, a small town near the Indian border in the Terai region of Nepal, and stay overnight in this transit city.

## Trek details

### Trek dates

Daily

### Season

September to end of November and February to late June

### Duration

20 days

### Trekking days

14

### Trekking grade

Medium – Hard

### Maximum altitude

5318m

### Starting point of trek

Juphal

### Finishing point of trek

Juphal

### Trek style (accommodation)

Camping

### Trek code

W3

**Day 04 – Nepaljung to Dunai (2796m) via Juphal (2354m)**

We will leave early in the morning on the only flight out to Juphal. It is a short flight with wonderful views of the precipitous hillsides and river valleys. The airstrip at Juphal is at an altitude of 2354m, so we will have a relatively easy trek as we walk along the Thuli Bheri River to Dunai.

**Day 05 – Dunai to Tarakot (2550m)**

We follow our trail eastwards out of Dunai, along the south bank of the Thulo Bheri ascending slowly upstream on a good trail. We will cross the river many times as we will come closer to our campsite below the fortress of Tarakot village. After dropping our luggage it is worth a climb to the village for a look around (5 hrs).

**Day 06 – Tarakot to Khanigoan (2540m)**

The trek of today to Khanigoan goes alongside terraced fields following the Barbung Khola river and crosses to the western bank just below its confluence with Tarap Khola. After a few ups and downs the trail crosses this river on a 120m-long, high suspension bridge. At 2540 meter there is a place to camp on the banks of the Tarap Chu (chu is Tibetan for river) in a lovely cedar grove (4 hrs).

**Day 07 – Khanigoan to Chheur (3610m)**

The Tarap Valley narrows up in a tight V shape gorge ahead. Climbing through cedar forests and fields of cannabis over the tops of some spectacular landslides. The new trail here is excellent, with stone steps and tunnels blasted out the rock through the steepest part of the gorge. The river drops steeply alongside the trail – 600 meter in only 3 kilometre. Finally the gorge opens up at Lahini which is a rough grass slope at 3160 meter. Beyond this the trail passes through grassy meadows, gravelled river beds and one can see waterfalls spraying from the rock walls. We continue climbing over ridges, with the usual ups and downs, to another crest at 3600 meter. The trail stays high for a while before descending to a rushing side stream, the Tilba Khola, at 3570 meter. We have to climb one more ridge to arrive at our campsite at Chheur, where there are large rose shrubs, yellow poppies and magenta-blooming legumes (6–7 hrs).



Tarap Valley

**Day 08 – Chheur to Sishul Khola (3770m)**

Our trail stays at the west bank of the river, making some short climbs before reaching Nawor Pani, a shelter at 2620 meter. The valley turns a bit to the west as the trail makes its way to a grassy meadow and crosses and recrosses the Tarap Chu a few times on a series of log and stone bridges. After crossing the Tarap Chu on a very short bridge where the river emerges from a narrow, steep gorge we climb further on the east bank through a true trans-Himalayan landscape to a chorten (Buddhist prayer temple) on a ridge at 3870 meter. We enter 'blue-sheep country' now; there are numerous herds living among the yellow rocks and cliffs. We descend from here to the Sishul Khola river, where there is a grassy campsite (5 hrs).

**Day 09 – Sishul Khola to Do Tarap (4080m)**

We start by climbing gently to two weatherworn chortens atop a ridge. From here the trail is rocky as it traverses beneath cliffs to a bridge at 3890 meter where we cross to the east bank. We continue climbing up the canyon alongside the river. It will not be long before we see the white Ribo Bhumpa gompa ahead of in Do Tarap. We will continue with a short climb alongside a line of ancient chortens to Do Tarap, where there is a camp site in a grassy meadow south of the village (4 hrs).

**Day 10 – Rest day for acclimatization**

Visit monasteries during day trip.

**Day 11 – Do Tarap to Tok–khyu High Camp (4390m)**

Our path heads west out of Do Tarap past a cluster of stone house and past the Crystal Mountain School, which is the first serious attempt to bring education to this remote region. Beyond the school a trail leads uphill to Ga Kar ('white mountain') village. We continue our way up the valley to Trangmar (red cliff) and Dorje Phorba gumpa at 4170 meter. We continue on to Tok–Khyu village at 4180 meter and from here it is about an hour further following the stream to the campsite at 4390 meter (6 hrs).



Crystal Mountain School

**Day 12 – Tok–khyu High Camp to Pelungtang (4465m)**

We will have to start early to pass the Numa La pass (5318m) under the best circumstances. We have to climb steeply up a grassy slope to a ridge where there are several mani walls and a chorten at 4580 meter. We climb further up along a moraine to Numa La pass, which is about 4 hrs past our high camp. On a clear day we will have excellent views of Dhaulagiri I (8167m). From the pass we descend into an U-shaped, rocky valley. We follow the river here downstream and cross it on a combination of rocks and logs and climb back up again on the south bank which climbs gently but continually to a good camp site in a meadow at 4465 meter. This area is known as Pelungtang; tang in Tibetan means meadow (7 hrs).

**Day 13 – Pelungtang to Dajok Tang (3800m)**

Today is a tough day when the pass is covered with snow, but it is not really difficult when the route is clear. It takes about 3 hrs to reach the Baga La pass (5190m) marked by prayer flags and cairns. From the pass one can see several snow clad peaks including the Kanjiroba massif. We descend steeply down from the pass until our trail levels out staying high above the stream until we enter a huge valley at 4390 meter. From here we make a final descent on steep switchbacks to Dajok Tang ('prayer flag meadow') at 4080 meter. The stream drops beside the trail in an impressive series of step-like waterfalls. This is truly a spectacular valley, with a large moraine, said to encompass a lake, at its head and numerous waterfalls shooting of near-vertical rock cliffs. We continue for a short while before reaching our campsite of today (6 hrs).



Bagala Pass

**Day 14 – Dajok Tang to Phoksumdo Lake (3730m)**

The trail today remains on the right bank of the Sanu Bheri. It is a magnificent trek with wonderful views every step of the way. In some places there are broad meadows and in others the valley teeters along steep hillside. Along the trail we will see Norbu Kang (6005m), Kagmara peak and other peaks of Kanjeluwa. Eventually the trail emerges onto an area with thorny shrubs and descends a bit, then climbs on a high Cliffside trail to a ridge at 3780 meter. From here is a great view across the valley to the huge waterfall formed by the Phoksumdo Khola river. The trail levels out again and re-enters the forest as it climbs to another ridge at 3820 meter. It descends gently through a blue pine forest to the national park camping ground near Phoksumdo Lake. It's a spectacular lake of 4.8 km long and 1.8 km wide. It is said to be 650 meter deep. There is no aquatic life in the lake, which helps to make the water brilliantly clear and it has an aquamarine like colour.

**Day 15 – Phoksumdo Lake to Renje (3010)**

Today we descend to the village of Renje, first crossing the picturesque village of Ringmo, with its flat roofed stone houses and many mud-plastered chortens and mani walls. Ascending through birch forests we will follow our trail past the spectacular 200 meter high waterfall coming from Phoksumdo lake, this is the highest waterfall of Nepal. We keep following this river downwards crossing it many times till we reach our campsite at Renje (5 hrs).



Village of Ringmo

**Day 16 – Renje to Chepka (2670m)**

Also today we will follow the river further downwards making many ups and downs alongside it. We will go through forests of firs and larches till the trail becomes more rocky and forming a dyke on the side of the river. If we are lucky the small village of Chepka has just been restocked by cargo helicopters and we will be able to buy some refreshments like soft drinks or cold beers. We will camp on a meadow next to a walnut grove (5 hrs).

**Day 17 – Chepka to Juphal (2490m)**

Today we walk to the region famous for its lotus-like plant called chuk, which is used to make vinegar and medicines. We pass through the villages of Ankhe, Rahagaon and Parela, meaning ‘eye’, ‘eyebrow’ and ‘eyelash’ respectively. We keep walking downstream following the river to Dunai. From here we ascend to Juphal climbing through wide meadows. In Juphal we will spend the night in one of its hotels where a well deserved hot shower awaits us (7 hrs).

**Day 18 & 19 – Juphal to Nepalgunj/Kathmandu**

From Jumla we fly back to Nepalgunj and then fly to Kathmandu.  
Overnight stay at hotel.

**Day 20 – 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)