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Thorong La Pass & Tilicho Lake Trek

A Journey Through High Himalayan Wilderness, Sacred Lakes, and Legendary Passes

Duration: 11 Days

Max Altitude: 5416 m (Thorong La Pass)

Trek Grade: Moderate

Start / End: Kathmandu

Accommodation: Hotel in Kathmandu | Teahouse during trek

Best Season: March-May | September-November

Group Type: Private or Group Joining



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Overview

The **Thorong La Pass & Tilicho Lake Trek** is a dramatic and emotional Himalayan adventure that combines the thrill of crossing one of the world's highest mountain passes with the serene beauty of a high-altitude lake. Starting from lush valleys and rising through rugged landscapes, the trek takes you into the remote heart of the Annapurna region, where every step feels like a deeper connection with nature. The highlight is Tilicho Lake, a mystical blue gem set beneath towering peaks, followed by the challenging ascent to Thorong La Pass, where the panoramic views and sense of achievement create a moment of pure triumph. This trek is not just a journey, it is a powerful test of endurance, a celebration of courage, and a memory that stays with you forever.

Trip Highlights

- **Tilicho Lake (4,919 m)** is one of the highest lakes in the world with stunning mountain reflections.
- **Thorong La Pass (5,416 m)** is a challenging high-altitude crossing with breathtaking views.
- **Remote Himalayan landscapes** feature rugged terrain, alpine meadows, and dramatic cliffs.
- **Cultural richness** includes traditional villages, monasteries, and warm local hospitality.
- **A journey of courage and transformation** is a trek that tests your limits and rewards your spirit.

Itinerary

Day 1: Kathmandu → Chame (Drive | 10–11 hours | 2,670 m)

Early morning departure from Kathmandu by private jeep, driving through Besisahar and along the Marsyangdi River. The journey offers scenic views of hills, rivers, waterfalls, and rural villages before reaching Chame, the administrative center of Manang, where you stay overnight.

Day 2: Chame → Pisang (Trek | 5–6 hours | 3,200 m)

The trek begins through pine forests and narrow valleys, crossing suspension bridges and following the Marsyangdi River. Enjoy views of Annapurna II and Lamjung Himal before arriving at Pisang, a traditional mountain village.



Day 3: Pisang → Manang via Upper Pisang (Trek | 6–7 hours | 3,540 m)

Today's route follows the scenic Upper Pisang trail, offering panoramic Himalayan views of Annapurna II, III, IV, Gangapurna, and Tilicho Peak. Passing through ancient monasteries and Tibetan-influenced villages, you gradually ascend to Manang.

Day 4: Manang – Acclimatization Day (Optional Hike | 3–4 hours | 3,540 m)

A rest day for proper acclimatization. Optional hikes include Gangapurna Lake, Bhojo Gumpa, or Ice Lake viewpoints. You may also explore Manang village or attend the altitude awareness talk by the Himalayan Rescue Association.

Day 5: Manang → Khangsar (Trek | 4–5 hours | 3,734 m)

Leaving Manang, the trail heads west toward Tilicho Lake through alpine terrain and yak pastures. The walk is gradual and scenic, passing juniper bushes and dry landscapes before reaching the peaceful village of Khangsar.

Day 6: Khangsar → Tilicho Base Camp (Trek | 5–6 hours | 4,150 m)

The trail ascends along steep and narrow paths with impressive rock formations and mountain views. Walking carefully through landslide-prone sections, you reach Tilicho Base Camp, set beneath dramatic cliffs and glaciers.

Day 7: Tilicho Base Camp → Tilicho Lake → Shree Kharka (Trek | 6–7 hours | 4,919 m)

An early morning hike leads to Tilicho Lake, one of the world's highest lakes, surrounded by towering snow-covered peaks. After spending time at the lake, descend carefully to Shree Kharka for overnight stay.

Day 8: Shree Kharka → Yak Kharka (Trek | 5–6 hours | 4,050 m)

The trail reconnects with the main Annapurna Circuit route, traversing alpine meadows and open landscapes. A gradual ascent and descent leads to Yak Kharka, where yaks often graze near the lodges.

Day 9: Yak Kharka → Thorong Phedi / High Camp (Trek | 4–5 hours | 4,540 m)

Today's trek is short but important for acclimatization. The trail climbs steadily past Ledar and across landslide sections before reaching Thorong Phedi or High Camp, where you rest and prepare for the pass crossing.

Day 10: Thorong Phedi → Thorong La Pass → Muktinath (Trek | 7–9 hours | 5,416 m / 3,800 m)

An early pre-dawn start takes you to Thorong La Pass, the highest point of the trek. After enjoying panoramic Himalayan views, descend steeply into the Mustang region and continue to the sacred pilgrimage site of Muktinath.



Day 11: Muktinath → Kathmandu (Drive | 10–12 hours | 1,350 m)

After breakfast, drive from Muktinath via Jomsom and Pokhara, passing through the Kali Gandaki Valley and dramatic mountain landscapes. Arrive in Kathmandu by evening, marking the end of the trek.

All You Need to Know

1. Visa Process

Nepal's tourist visa fees vary by duration, with common options on arrival being \$30 for 15 days, \$50 for 30 days, and \$125 for 90 days, plus \$3/day for extensions.

2. Guide In Nepal

You will need a guide for tour, trekking, peak climbing as well as expedition.

- Tour Guide: A professional who leads sightseeing tours and provides local information.
- Driver Guide: A driver who also acts as a guide during travel.
- Trekking Guide: An experienced guide who leads trekking routes safely.
- Peak Climbing Guide: A trained guide for high-altitude mountain climbing.
- Expedition Sherpa Guide: A skilled Sherpa who supports and guides challenging expeditions.
- Porter: A helper who carries luggage or trekking gear, sometimes also assisting as a guide.

3. Accommodation

Stay comfortably with options to suit every traveler from budget backpacker stays (USD \$10) to 5★ city hotels (USD \$90) to cozy teahouses with attached bathrooms and camps along the trekking trails.

4. Transportation

Choose from local buses, private cars, shared or private jeeps, domestic flights, and helicopter transfers for convenient travel across Nepal.

5. Permits and entrance fees

Trekking and visiting protected areas in Nepal require permits and entrance fees to support conservation and local communities. Key permits and fees include:

- TIMS (Trekker's Information Management System) Card: Required for most trekking regions.
- ACAP Permit (Annapurna Conservation Area Permit): Needed for trekking in Annapurna region.



- KCA Permit (Kanchenjunga Conservation Area Permit): Required for Kanchenjunga treks.
- SAC Permit (Sagarmatha National Park Entry Permit): Needed for Everest region treks.
- Langtang National Park Entry Permit: Required for treks in Langtang region.
- Manaslu Conservation Area Permit (MCAP): Needed for Manaslu trekking.
- Royal Chitwan National Park Entry Fee: For visiting Chitwan National Park.
- Bardia National Park Entry Fee: For wildlife safaris in Bardia.

Fees vary by nationality and trekking region.

6. Meals

During your trek, meals are usually served in teahouses or lodges, with options for local Nepali cuisine, vegetarian, and international dishes. Breakfast is usually included in accommodation. In the city, you can enjoy a wide variety of restaurants, cafes, and hotel dining.

7. Health & Safety

- Altitude sickness awareness and proper acclimatization are crucial when trekking above 2,500m.
- Carry basic medications and a personal first-aid kit.
- Drink bottled or purified water only.
- Vaccinations (such as Hepatitis A, Typhoid, and Tetanus) are recommended before travel.
- Emergency rescue services are available in major trekking regions.

8. Currency & Payments

- Nepalese Rupee (NPR) is the local currency.
- ATMs are available in major cities but limited in remote areas. Credit cards are accepted in hotels, restaurants, and shops in cities.
- Cash is essential for trekking regions.

9. Communication & Internet

Local SIM cards (Ncell or Nepal Telecom) are easily available at the airport and in cities. Mobile network coverage is good in cities and popular trekking routes. Wi-Fi is available in hotels and teahouses, sometimes at an extra cost in remote areas.

10. Cultural Etiquette & Local Customs

Dress modestly, especially in rural areas and religious sites. Remove shoes before entering temples and homes.



Respect local traditions and festivals.
Ask permission before taking photos of people.

11. Responsible & Sustainable Travel

Avoid single-use plastics and use refillable bottles.

Respect wildlife and natural environments.

Support local communities by using local guides, porters, and accommodations.

Follow “Leave No Trace” principles during treks.

Important Information

- This trek requires a good level of physical fitness, as it involves long walking days, uneven terrain, and gradual ascent at higher altitudes. Participants are strongly advised to prepare in advance through regular exercise, endurance training, and hiking practice.
- Altitude-related illnesses such as Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) can occur above 2,500 m. All itineraries are designed with proper acclimatization days to minimize risk; however, individuals must follow the guide’s instructions and report any symptoms immediately. If symptoms worsen, descending to a lower altitude is mandatory for safety.
- Weather conditions in the Himalayas are unpredictable and can change rapidly, particularly during monsoon and winter seasons. Trekking schedules may be adjusted due to weather, trail conditions, or safety considerations.
- Luggage limits are strictly enforced, typically allowing 10–12 kg of personal baggage per trekker. Excess luggage can be carried by porters or arranged separately at an additional cost.
- Comprehensive travel insurance covering high-altitude trekking, emergency medical treatment, and helicopter evacuation is mandatory. Proof of insurance must be provided before the trek begins.

