

Mount Chomolhari & Lingshi, Bhutan *New for 2021*



Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

Holiday overview

Style	Trek
Accommodation	Hotels, Camping
Grade	Vigorous / Strenuous
Duration	17 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 9 days, Walks on: 1 day
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Local Leader Bhutan
Land only	Joining in Kathmandu, Nepal
Max altitude	4,930m/16,175ft, Yeli La, Day 11

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



tel: +44 (0)1453 844400 fax: +44 (0)1453 844422 info@mountainkingdoms.com www.mountainkingdoms.com

Mountain Kingdoms Ltd, 20 Long Street, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire GL12 7BT UK
Managing Director: Steven Berry. Registered in England No. 2118433. VAT No. 496 6511 08

Departures

2021 Dates:

Sat 01 May - Sun 16 May

Fri 08 Oct - Sun 24 Oct With Chomolhari Mountain Festival

2022 Dates:

Sat 30 Apr - Sun 15 May

Sat 08 Oct - Mon 24 Oct With Chomolhari Mountain Festival

Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday.

If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

Your guide



You will have an English-speaking Bhutanese guide to lead your trip. Mountain Kingdoms have been working with the same partner in Bhutan since 1986 and their guides are some of the best in the Kingdom. They speak good English, as this is taught in all Bhutanese schools, and are fully qualified guides. The Tourism Authority of Bhutan insists that a Bhutanese trek or tour leader must pass his/her guiding exams in Thimphu before accompanying groups of foreign visitors. Guides receive regular 'top-up' training and 15 of our regular leaders have completed an extended training course run by Mountain Kingdoms in Bhutan.

Your trip highlights

- A fully supported, well-paced trek with excellent acclimatisation
- Trek to the base Camp of Mount Chomolhari and return via the high pass of the Yeli La
- Walk to the Tiger's Nest Monastery before the trek and explore some of the key cultural sights of Paro
- Join the celebrations at the Chomolhari Mountain Festival (October departure)
- Enjoy sightseeing in the country's fascinating capital, Thimphu
- Experience first-rate camping facilities on trek and good quality hotels in Bhutan and Kathmandu

At a glance itinerary

Days 1-3	Arrive Kathmandu. Fly to Paro in Bhutan.
Day 4	Sightseeing Paro Valley. Trek to Taktsang - 5-6 hours.
Day 5	Trek and drive from Paro to Shana.
Days 6-7	Trek to Soi Thangthanka. Trek to Chomolhari Base Camp (Jangothang).
Day 8	Rest and acclimatisation day. October departure attends the Chomolhari Mountain Festival.
Day 9	Trek to Lingshi
Day 10	Trek to Jimthang just before reaching the Yeli La.
Day 11	Cross Yeli La and trek to Shodu
Day 12	Trek to Barshong Gumpa and continue to Domshesha.
Day 13	Trek to road head and drive to Thimphu. At leisure in Thimphu.
Day 14	Sightseeing in Thimphu. Drive to Paro.
Days 15-17	Fly to Kathmandu. At leisure. Overnight flight to London.

Trip summary

This magnificent circuit trek, takes you deep into the heart of some of Bhutan's most spectacular Himalayan scenery, to the foot of the second highest mountain in the Thunder Dragon Kingdom and far beyond. The trek in to Mount Chomolhari's base camp at Jangothang traverses beautiful and varied country, starting in the cultivated fields and villages of the upper Paro valley, and climbing through the pristine, indigenous forest of the Paro Chu Valley to the remote high mountain landscapes inhabited only by yak herders. You will have a full day at Chomolhari Base Camp with time to acclimatise and explore the mountain's glacier and the scenic area above the camp.

You then trek further into the mountains, along pristine trails to cross the Nyelela Pass and reach the remote village of Lingshi. From Lingshi you trek out via the Yale La Pass, the highest point of your trek and through more wild and beautiful countryside to reach the road head, before driving to Thimphu.

As well as fabulous scenery along your trek there are good opportunities to see wildlife, large herds of blue sheep, eagles soaring on the thermals and, if you are extremely lucky, that the most elusive of mountain creatures, the snow leopard, or at least its footprints! You may also visit local farmhouses or the tents of yak herders for a privileged glimpse into rural Bhutanese life.

In addition to some superb trekking you will also enjoy some of Bhutan's key cultural sights, including the walk up to the iconic Taktsang Monastery, known as the Tiger's Nest, and a day of sightseeing in the capital Thimphu, famed for its many artisan workshops.

The autumn departure may also visit the Chomolhari Mountain Festival which celebrates the culture, wildlife and natural beauty of the region (please note that the festival dates are only provisional at present).

Your trip itinerary

Day 1: Depart London.

Depart London on your overnight flight to Kathmandu.

Overnight: In flight

Day 2: Arrive Kathmandu.

You will be met on arrival and transferred to your hotel. You might like to venture out to Thamel for your evening meal, or eat in the restaurant if you are tired from your journey.

Overnight: Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu

Day 3: Fly to Paro.

Transfer to the airport for the flight to Paro. On a clear day the panoramic views of the Himalaya are sensational, including Everest, but particularly exciting is the approach through the Bhutanese foothills and the landing, including a few steep turns, to land at the tiny airstrip at Paro. You are at the mercy of the Druk air-ticketing computer, but if there is an option, try to sit on the left-hand side of the plane.

In Paro you will be transferred to your hotel. There may be time for a wander around the streets of the small township of Paro, take a look at the Queen Mother's Winter Palace and go for a walk up to look at the Dzong.



Overnight: Hotel Olathang or Similar, Paro (Meals: BLD)

Day 4: Sightseeing Paro Valley. Trek to Taktsang - 5-6 hours.

Today you visit the Paro Valley, site of the famous Tiger's nest, the Taktsang Monastery, which is perched some 600m/2,000ft up on a cliff overlooking the valley. Taktsang was said to be where the legendary Indian saint Guru Padma Sambhava flew from Tibet on the back of a tiger to defeat five demons who were opposing the spread of Buddhism in Bhutan.

There may also be time today to see some of the treasures from Bhutan's National Museum. The museum was closed following the earthquake in 2011, but many of the artefacts and displays will be temporarily housed in a nearby building until renovation is completed. There will also be a chance to wander around the small township of Paro itself and to visit the market.

Overnight: Hotel Olathang or Similar, Paro (Meals: BLD)

Day 5: Trek and drive from Paro to Shana, 2,788m/9,148ft - 5-6 hours.

You leave the hotel and walk up a hill to a village. You continue trekking along forested ridges until you reach Kyichu. You will visit the ancient temple of Kyichu Lhakang, one of the oldest in Bhutan, which was one of 108 temples built by Songtsen Gampo, an important early Tibetan king, to pin down the Bon demon that was thought to hover over the whole of Tibet.

From here it's an hour's drive to Gunitsawa from where it is a short walk through the army base to cross the river on a small bridge and walk upstream to camp at Shana.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 6: Shana to Soi Thangthanka, 3,519m/11,545ft - 7-8 hours.

Still following the river in heavily forested country, the route is dotted with isolated farmhouses and plenty of bird life. You may be advised by your Bhutanese guide to walk in pairs on this section as there are still bears in this area. You pass a junction en route, where another trail leads north over the Tremo La to Tibet. Spencer Chapman crossed the Tremo La in 1937 on his way to climb Chomolhari from Tibet.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 7: Trek to Chomolhari Base Camp (Jangothang), 4,090m/13,416ft - 5-6 hours.

It is worth getting up early to photograph the dawn colours on Bhutan's second highest mountain, Chomolhari, which is framed at the end of the valley. After about an hour's walk you slowly leave the forest line and gradually climb into a beautiful valley, passing Tengethang, a winter home of yak herdsman. You should see lots of yaks today before you arrive at a row of small chortens and stone huts, which is the base camp for the mountain. At 7,314m/ 23,997ft Chomolhari overlooks the camp and nearby there are ruins of the old fortress which used to guard Bhutan against Tibetan invasion.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 8: Rest and acclimatisation day. Attend Chomolhari Mountain Festival (October departure).

It is highly advisable that you do some sort of walk today involving height gain in order to help with acclimatisation. There are several excellent walks to choose from today. You may walk up to the Chomolhari glacier, climb the grassy ridge just north of the base camp to reach a small peak at 4,760m/15,617ft for great views, or for an easier option walk up the valley towards Jitchu Drake base camp.

If travelling on our autumn departure, you may have the opportunity to join the celebrations at the Chomolhari Mountain Festival. This festival celebrates the culture of the high mountain communities living in this area and the natural wonders that surround them - the mountains and the wild life, especially the snow leopard. Please note that the festival dates are currently provisional and we cannot guarantee this visit.



Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 9: Trek to Lingshi, 4,149m/13,612ft, via the Nyelela Pass, 4,890m/16,043ft - 6-7 hours.

You will have a good day's walking today with spectacular views of several stunning Himalayan peaks, including Jitchu Drake, 6,850m/22,470ft, and Tsering Kang, 6,994m/22,946ft. You start climbing straight away and after some 3-4 hours reach the windy Nyelela Pass, 4,890m/16,043ft. Along the way you may well pass yak herders' 'jhas' (tents) where you may be invited in to sample tea, yoghurt or cheese - all three are acquired tastes! It is a very special experience to meet these lovely people. Coming down from the pass to Lingshi you will have your first views of its mystical 17th century dzong, atop a 600ft high hill. The dzong is (just) standing despite being badly damaged by an earthquake, and renovation may be ongoing. Depending on its current state of repair you may be able to visit the dzong. In addition to a very special atmosphere of mystic tranquillity, Lingshi Dzong offers a great view over the valley.

Your camp will be in the valley below.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 10: Trek to Jimthang (just below the Yeli La) - 4-5 hours.

Before setting off for today's walk you have time to explore the village and perhaps walk up to the dzong if you have not already done so. The school here serves several local villages.

Leaving Lingshi behind you climb towards a white chorten on a ridge above the camp, then turn south up the deep Mo Chhu valley. The trail stays on the west side of this largely treeless valley, crossing numerous side streams and climbing steeply to Jimthang, situated just below the Yeli La.

(Trekking Lingshi to Shodu with the crossing the Yeli La Pass would make a very long day, so we split this day into two, camping before the pass crossing).

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 11: Cross the Yele La Pass 4,930m/16,175ft and trek to Shodu, 3,900m/12,795ft - 4-5 hours.

From camp you climb for about two hours, finally zigzagging through rocks to a large cairn at the Yele La Pass. This pass is the highest and most remote point on your trek. The views from the top are breath taking - on a clear day you may see among others Chomolhari, Tserim Gang and Masagang.

From the pass it is a long, steep descent down the valley alongside a stream to a rock shelter in the cliff face, and then continuing on downstream to your camp at Shodu. Look out for Blue sheep as you descend.



Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 12: Trek to Barshong Gompa and on to Domshesha, 3,449m/11,316ft - 6-7 hours.

This is quite a long day. The path follows the Thimpu Chu River down through rhododendron, juniper, blue pine and mixed alpine forests with tremendous views of rocky cliff faces and waterfalls along the way. You descend a steep stone staircase to the river, possibly stopping at the riverside for lunch. You descend further alongside the river, crossing it several times, and then finally climb in one hour to regain 300m to reach the ruined gompa at Barshong, 3,710m.

Your trail now descends gradually through dense forest of rhododendron, birch and conifers (Langur monkeys may be seen along the way) and then drops steeply to on a rocky trail to join the river. Thirty further minutes of walking through larch forest leads to a clearing at 3,370m and then in 15 minutes to Domshesha. This will be your last night of camping.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 13: Trek to the road head and drive to Thimphu, 2,334m/7,657ft.

After breakfast you trek just a short way to reach a forest road where you will meet your transport. Here you will say farewell to your trek team and drive to Thimphu (1 hour), the capital of Bhutan.

Thimphu has an attractive valley location and is relatively small for a capital city although it has expanded greatly in recent years. You'll have the afternoon to relax and enjoy the comforts of your hotel with a shower and a beer.

Overnight: Phuntso Pelri Hotel or Similar, Thimphu (Meals: BLD)

Day 14: Sightseeing in Thimphu. Drive to Paro.

Thimphu has been the permanent capital since 1955 and has two cinemas and a radio station. This is the least visited of all the Himalayan capitals with a population of around 100,000, has wide streets and a rather relaxed air. Its sights include the Late King's Memorial Chorten, the Textile Museum, the Heritage Museum, the silversmiths and pottery workshops, the indigenous hospital specialising in herbal medicine, the thangka painting school, the Bhutanese paper factory, the recently built Changlingmithang Lhakhang temple, and the National Library. After a day's sightseeing, you will be driven back to Paro.



Overnight: Hotel Olathang or Similar, Paro (Meals: BLD)

Day 15: Fly to Kathmandu.

This is normally an early morning flight which takes you out and over the Bhutanese Mountains and past Kangchenjunga, Makalu and Everest, finally dropping down into Kathmandu Valley. You will be met and transferred to the Shangri-La Hotel, after which there will be plenty of time to relax and gather your thoughts.

Overnight: Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu (Meals: B)

Day 16: At leisure. Afternoon transfer to airport. Depart Kathmandu.

You will have time at leisure in Kathmandu today when you may do some sightseeing or shopping, or simply relax by the pool at your hotel. Later there will be a group transfer to the airport for your overnight flight to London.

Overnight: In flight (Meals: B)

Day 17: Arrive London.

Our grading system

Mount Chomolhari & Lingshi is graded as a Vigorous/Strenuous trekking holiday, as described below.

Vigorous

Typically these trips involve 8 to 14 days (occasionally more) trekking in relatively remote landscapes. High passes up to 4,900m/16,000ft may be crossed (sometimes snow-covered) and there may also be glacier travel and peak ascents. Walking days can be between 5 and 8 hours with considerable ascents and descents. This grade also covers some European treks of shorter durations. Overnight stops on trek could be in tea houses, mountain huts or camping.

These holidays would suit enthusiastic hill/mountain walkers.

Strenuous

Our strenuous trekking holidays can involve anything from 10 to 30 days on trek and are often in remote areas, far from 'civilisation'. Rest days are interspersed but there may be up to 7 consecutive days of hard walking. Most treks reach altitudes of at least 4,900m/16,000ft and there will be a great deal of ascent and descent. The majority of our strenuous treks utilise camping, tea house or mountain lodge accommodation.

Trip altitude

Important - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend www.medex.org.uk as a good source of information.

What the price includes

Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

What's included:

- ✓ An English-speaking Bhutanese leader
- ✓ Flights between Kathmandu and Paro and hotel/airport transfers
- ✓ Bhutan visa and Bhutan departure tax
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK & UK Departure Tax (flight inclusive only)
- ✓ Single, timed group airport transfers for international flights on arrival and departure
- ✓ Good quality 4* hotel accommodation in Kathmandu, on a twin share, bed and breakfast basis
- ✓ In Bhutan, good standard hotel accommodation in Paro and Thimphu, on a twin share, full board basis
- ✓ The use of a good quality down jacket and sleeping bag (when travelling to Bhutan via Kathmandu).
- ✓ All camping facilities (twin share tents) and all meals on trek
- ✓ Camp staff to carry out all camp work and all portage on trek
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ Sightseeing where specified
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ A free high-quality Mountain Kingdoms kit bag
- ✓ The option of joining one of our four pre-trip meets in the Cotswolds

Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

What's not included:

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Visa fees for Nepal
- ✗ Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu
- ✗ Optional trips
- ✗ Tips

Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate. For further information about our campaign visit [For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>](https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign).

Your accommodation

We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in this itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is unavailable we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.

Hotels in Bhutan

Please note that there is generally a shortage of hotel/lodge accommodation in Bhutan, especially outside Paro and Thimphu. Although we pre-book rooms as far in advance as possible, anything can happen and probably will, e.g. if the royal family suddenly has a visiting delegation, accommodation may be changed at short notice. Additionally, during peak seasons, it can sometimes be very difficult to secure not only the hotels/lodges we want, but also the single rooms we might need. In these circumstances singles may occasionally be asked to share but in such cases we refund any single room supplements that might apply. Given these conditions we will make every effort to secure any of the following hotels:



Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu

The Shangri La Hotel is a 4* hotel of character, just a stone's throw from the British Embassy and only a 20 minute walk or short taxi ride into the popular tourist area of Thamel. The hotel has a swimming pool, a lovely, landscaped garden, and a choice of restaurants and bars. Recent entertainment additions include a casino and fitness centre.



Hotel Olathang or Similar, Paro

Originally built for the coronation of the Bhutan's 4th King in 1974, this attractive hotel stands on a hill overlooking Paro town. Rooms in the main building are set around a peaceful courtyard and there are also a number of cottages dotted around the spacious grounds. Decoration is typically Bhutanese with stripped wooden floors and colourfully painted walls. Rooms are well-equipped and the hotel has its own spa, international restaurant and bar.



Phuntso Pelri Hotel or Similar, Thimphu

Despite its somewhat dark entrance hall, this new hotel is very well appointed, with custom made Bhutanese wooden furniture and good sized rooms. During busy periods, especially during festivals, we may use the Jomolhari Hotel, the Kisa Hotel, Hotel Gakyil, Hotel Osel or the Amodhara Hotel. These are amongst the best tourist class hotels in Thimphu.

Camping

On our camping treks, the following are provided: a sleeping tent, a dining tent, a toilet tent exclusively for your group to use, and a kitchen tent. There are camp chairs or stools, a lamp for reading in the dining tent at night, a dining table, crockery and tableware. The staff put up and take down the tents, make the tea, cook the food, wash the dishes, and load the porters or pack animals. Your kit bag is carried for you either by porters or pack animals and you just trek with a light day sack.

Meal arrangements

Bed and Breakfast in Kathmandu and all meals in Bhutan.

Flight arrangements

Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

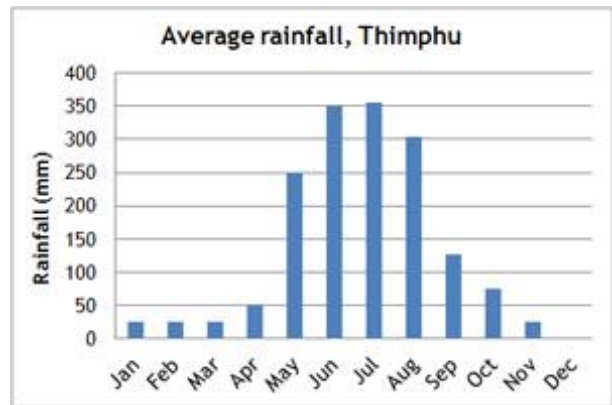
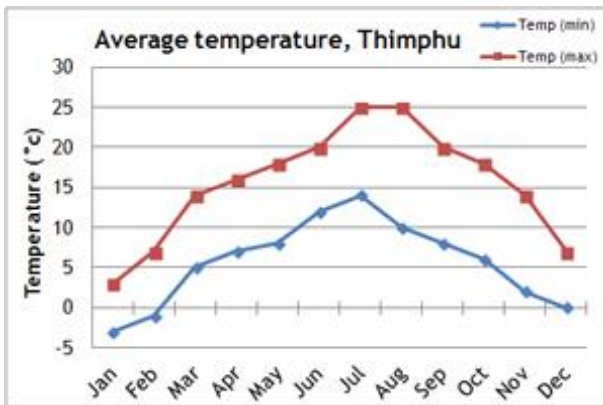
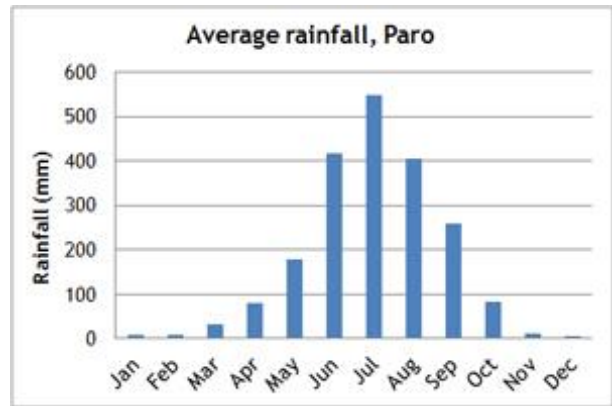
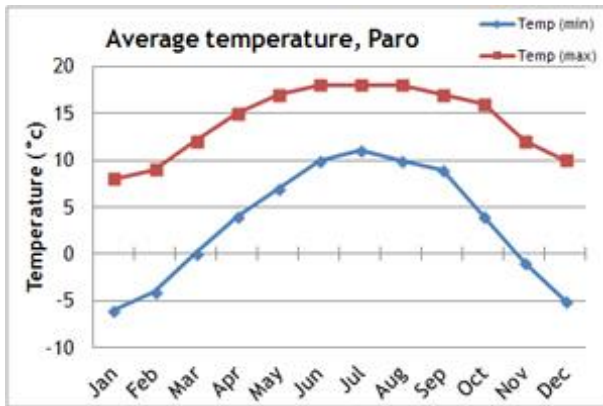
Further information

When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

The nature of adventure travel

Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

Climate information



Extensions

Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at www.mountainkingdoms.com.



Hotel upgrades and extra nights in Bhutan

If you would like to upgrade your hotel during your holiday take a look at our selection of luxury properties in Bhutan such as Uma Paro or the Taj Tashi in Thimphu, you can download a leaflet from our website detailing all hotel options. We can also add additional nights in Bhutan at the start or end of your trip.

Additional accommodation in Nepal

If you would like to extend your stay in Nepal, you can add extra nights at your group tour accommodation or choose from our range of distinctive properties in Pokhara and the Kathmandu area. We can offer luxury resorts, heritage hotels, tranquil lodges and characterful cottages. Our selection includes Dwarika's Resort at Dhulikhel, Pavilions Himalaya at Pokhara, Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge and Shivapuri Heights Cottage. Individual extension leaflets for all these options can be downloaded from our website or requested from our office.



Kathmandu Valley sightseeing excursions

We can arrange half day or full day sightseeing tours taking you to the key cultural attractions of central Kathmandu or the Kathmandu Valley including the World Heritage Sites of Bhaktapur and Patan. Your tour will be led by an English speaking guide and you will have a private vehicle and driver.



Bumthang Extension

A five night extension taking in the key sights of the cultural heartland of Bhutan. The Bumthang region is a centre for Bhutanese weaving and is home to some of the country's most spectacular temples and fortresses. It is also very scenic and offers ample opportunities for walks along its four main valleys.



Wildlife extensions in Nepal - Chitwan, Bardia & Koshi Tappu

Visit Chitwan or Bardia National Parks home to a rich variety of birds and animals including elephant, rhinos, leopard and Bengal tiger. Stay in a comfortable lodge and enjoy a range of wildlife viewing activities. Alternatively visit the renowned Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve - one of the finest birdwatching and wildlife areas in all Asia.



Royal Manas National Park, Bhutan

Extend your stay in Bhutan with an extension to the Royal Manas National park, a wonderful birder's paradise close to the Indian border. Our extension package gives you three full days to explore the park and surrounding area, and you will be accompanied throughout by a specialist bird and wildlife guide. We also include all meals, private transport to/from Paro, and hotel accommodation close to the park.

Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

- Our itinerary allows for proper acclimatisation with gradual ascent and a rest day at Chomolhari Base Camp.
- We savour our time in the spectacular high mountain landscape allowing time to explore the area around Chomolhari Base Camp and to discover further remote and little-visited valleys.
- On our autumn departure we include a visit to the Chomolhari Mountain Festival, celebrating the local culture and stunning scenery of this special region.
- We have been pioneering holidays in Bhutan for over 30 years. Our M.D. Steve Berry, is one of the leading authorities on Bhutan in the travel industry and has written two books about his experiences in the Thunder Dragon Kingdom.
- If you have any questions about this trip, please contact Seraphina Berry at the MK office. She has undertaken this trek and visited Bhutan on many occasions. She will be happy to answer any queries you may have.
- Our maximum group size is 12 for this trip. This provides for a genuine small group travel experience and helps reduce the negative aspects associated with larger trekking groups.
- We offer a flexible service and can extend your holiday with extra hotel nights, upgrades and exciting activities.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- We are an IATA accredited agent and work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: www.mountainkingdoms.com or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

What our clients say*



I have been incredibly impressed by the level of customer service in the uk. The trip itself was brilliant and again everything ran like clockwork. The whole crew on the trek were amazing. We have trekked in the Himalayas on 4 previous occasions and this was definitely the best experience we have had.

-Ms S C, Edinburgh



I had dreamt of going to Bhutan for many years and ALL my hopes and expectations were met! It is a real jewel of a country, in such sharp contrast to India and Nepal (which I also love!). The landscape is, of course, stunning, the Bhuddist culture is rich and embracing, and the history and politics, not least the GNH, are deeply thought-provoking and optimistic. We only scratched the surface in two short weeks, but our itinerary and our wonderful guide have left me with an enriching and mind-expanding insight into a country with a very exciting approach to development.

-Ms S M, Aberdeenshire



This holiday lived up to all my expectations - and more. An excellent guide; a trek that took us into truly spectacular, remote areas and such an interesting, exciting country to visit at this stage in its development.

-Mr G P, South Yorkshire



Pre-trip we were very impressed by Mountain Kingdoms customer service. We received prompt responses to emails and helpful and accurate information. Every aspect was dealt with efficiently and professionally. We had lots of questions and requests but felt that nothing was too much trouble. It was a brilliant trek: stunning scenery, quiet and peaceful walking and acclimatisation was good. We rated the whole experience very highly!

- Ms J C & Mr J H, Edinburgh



Excellent guide and trek staff - really helpful and attentive. Well-thought out itinerary - particularly the addition of time in Thimphu.

-Mr & Mrs P, Oxford

The trip of 14 days broken down by 7 nights in a tent whilst trekking and 7/8 night in hotels which worked very well. The views on trek in Bhutan were exceptional - thank god for the good weather. Parts of the trek were fairly brutal but the pace was more or less left up to the individual. One part of the trek was changed with the consent of all in the group to take in a mountain festival. A great time was had by all especially our tug of war team which won a prize. Nothing was missed by this change. Our group consisted of a great mix of people and the guide/porters were excellent. A beautiful country.

-Mr K T, Tyne & Wear

**These reviews are based on the previous version of this trip which trekked a slightly different route via the Bonte La.*

Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

Truly independent

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

Complete financial security

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

No Surcharge Guarantee

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

Award winning Responsible Tourism

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Genuine small group travel

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

Loyalty Discount

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

Comprehensive information

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit www.tourismdeclares.com

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

Carbon Offsetting

Already doing:

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

Will do:

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

Already doing:

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

Will do:

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

