

Dhaulagiri Circuit Trek - A High Altitude Himalayan Expedition

Overview:

The Dhaulagiri Circuit Trek is one of Nepal's most remote and challenging high-altitude trekking adventures, circumnavigating Dhaulagiri I (8,167m), the world's seventh-highest mountain. Far beyond the country's more established trekking routes, this wilderness expedition crosses dramatic river valleys, isolated mountain settlements, and vast glacial landscapes, offering a true Himalayan adventure for experienced trekkers.

The trek begins in the lower Myagdi region, where the trail passes through traditional villages, terraced farmland, and dense rhododendron and bamboo forests. As the route gradually gains elevation, villages become fewer and the landscape transforms into rugged alpine terrain surrounded by towering Himalayan peaks. The journey passes through remarkable locations including Italian Base Camp, Dhaulagiri Base Camp, and Hidden Valley, while crossing high mountain passes such as French Col (5,360m) and Dhampus Pass (5,240m).

The remote nature of the Dhaulagiri Circuit makes it one of Nepal's most adventurous trekking routes. With limited infrastructure and several nights spent camping in high-altitude wilderness, the trek requires careful acclimatisation, strong preparation, and flexibility according to weather and trail conditions. The landscape changes dramatically throughout the journey, from lush valleys and forested hillsides to glaciers, ice-covered passes, and the immense mountain amphitheatres surrounding Dhaulagiri.

The Dhaulagiri Circuit Trek is best suited for experienced trekkers with excellent physical fitness and previous high-altitude trekking experience. The challenges are rewarded with an extraordinary journey through some of Nepal's most remote Himalayan landscapes, offering a rare combination of adventure, solitude, breathtaking mountain scenery, and an unforgettable wilderness experience.

Quick facts:

Cost: USD per Person

Destinations: Pokhara / Dharapani / Dhaulagiri Base Camp / French Col / Dhampus Pass / Jomsom

Duration: 17 Days

Trek starting point: Darbang

Trek ending point: Jomsom

Grade: Strenuous

Transportation: tourist coach / domestic flight

Accommodation: tea house, tourist standard hotel in Kathmandu

Max altitude: 5,360 m

Activities: Hiking & trekking & sightseeing

Best seasons: March, April, May, October, September and November

Please do not forget to carry the following items with you:

- Passport size Photos
- Torchlight / Headlight
- Warm cap
- Sunglass and sun-cream
- Sleeping bag (light weight)
- Trekking sticks
- Dry fruits and chocolates
- Down jacket
- Backpack (No luggage or hand carry)
- Trekking trousers
- Trekking shoes (No any converse and Vans shoes)

PROGRAM ITINERARY

▯ **Day 1: Arrive at Kathmandu / Meet and Greet**

Arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport. Our Staff member meets you and transfers you to the hotel.

Overnight at the hotel.

▯ **Day 2: Kathmandu Sightseeing and preparation for trekking**

Morning wake-up and breakfast in the hotel

Our guide will meet you at your hotel and brief you about the upcoming trek. He will guide you through all the formalities and necessary paperwork required for the trek.

After that, we then do a sightseeing tour in Kathmandu Valley of famous UNESCO world heritage sites like Boudhanath, one of the largest Stupas in the world and Swayambhunath, a famous monkey temple. Apart from Sightseeing, we also get a TIMS card and permits for our trekking on this day. In the evening, we do initial preparation for the trek.

Overnight at the hotel.

▯ **Day 3: Drive from Kathmandu to Pokhara (822 m): 6 – 8 hours drive**

After breakfast, we leave Kathmandu and drive to Pokhara, Nepal's beautiful lakeside city and gateway to the Himalayas. The journey follows scenic river valleys, terraced hillsides, and rural settlements, offering a glimpse into everyday life in Nepal's countryside.

The drive takes approximately 6 to 8 hours, depending on traffic and road conditions. Along the way, we pass several towns and enjoy views of the Trishuli River, rolling hills, and distant mountain ranges on clear days.

Upon arrival in Pokhara, we transfer to our hotel and have time to relax or explore the vibrant Lakeside area overlooking Phewa Lake. Overnight stay at a hotel.

▯ **Day 4: Drive to Darbang (1,180 m) and Trek to Dharapani (1,470 m) | 4 – 5 hours drive | 3 – 4 hours of trek**

After breakfast, we leave Pokhara and drive to Darbang (1,180 m), a bustling settlement in the Myagdi Valley and the traditional gateway to the Dhaulagiri region. The scenic drive takes approximately 4 to 5 hours, passing through terraced hillsides, riverside villages, and picturesque mountain landscapes.

Upon reaching Darbang, we begin our trek toward Dharapani (1,470 m). The trail follows the Myagdi Khola through cultivated farmland, small settlements, and forested sections, offering an enjoyable introduction to the trek and a glimpse into the daily life of local communities.

The trek takes around 3 to 4 hours before reaching Dharapani, a peaceful village surrounded by green hills and traditional farmland. Overnight stay at a teahouse.

▯ **Day 5: Trek from Dharapani to Muri (1,850 m): Walking Distance: 8 - 10 km | 5 - 6 hours**

We leave Dharapani in the morning and continue deeper into the Myagdi Valley, following a trail that blends riverside paths with gentle hillside climbs. The route passes through small Magar villages, terraced farmlands, and quiet forest sections, offering a genuine sense of rural mountain life away from main routes.

The trek takes around 5 to 6 hours, covering approximately 8 to 10 km. Along the way, we pass scattered hamlets and seasonal stopping points used by locals, while the valley gradually opens to wider views of rolling hills and distant ridgelines.

By late afternoon, we arrive at Muri (1,850 m), a beautiful ridge-top village known for its traditional stone houses, terraced fields, and sweeping mountain scenery. It is a peaceful and authentic Himalayan settlement, an ideal place to end the day's walk. Overnight stay at teahouse.

▯ **Day 6: Trek from Muri to Boghara (2,080 m): Walking Distance: 9 – 11 km | 5 – 6 hours**

We depart Muri in the morning, following a narrow trail that traces the ridge before easing down toward the river corridor. The path moves through terraced slopes, scattered Magar hamlets, and stretches of mixed forest, where the sound of the river gradually replaces the openness of the ridge views.

The walk takes around 5 to 6 hours, covering roughly 9 to 11 km, depending on the chosen line of the trail and ground conditions. It is a varied section, with short ascents and descents, river crossings, and quiet farming pockets where life feels steady and unchanged, shaped by the rhythm of the land.

By late afternoon, we arrive at Boghara (2,080 m), a small and remote settlement tucked into the hillside above the valley. Surrounded by forest and farmland, it offers a simple, peaceful stop with basic lodge accommodation and a strong sense of remoteness. Overnight stay at a teahouse.

▯ **Day 7: Trek from Boghara to Dobang(2,500 m): Walking distance: 12 – 13 km | 6 – 7 hours**

We leave Boghara in the morning and enter a more remote section of the valley, where the trail alternates between riverside paths and forested ascents. The route passes through bamboo groves, landslide-prone slopes, and narrow sections carved into the hillside, gradually feeling more isolated as we move deeper into the Dhaulagiri region.

The trek takes around 6 to 7 hours, covering approximately 12 to 13 km, depending on trail conditions and river crossings. It is a varied and engaging section where terrain dictates pace more than distance, with frequent changes between open river views and enclosed forest pathways.

By late afternoon, we arrive at Dobang (2,500 m), a quiet forest settlement surrounded by steep valley walls and dense vegetation. With basic lodge facilities, it offers a simple but atmospheric stop deep in the wilderness. Overnight stay at a teahouse.

▮ **Day 8: Trek from Dobang to Sallaghari (2,820 m): Walking Distance: 8 – 10 km | 5 – 7 hours**

Setting out from Dobang, the trail leads us deeper into the forested heart of the Dhaulagiri valley. The route follows the Myagdi Khola through dense bamboo and rhododendron forest, where the sound of flowing water and shifting light through the trees define the rhythm of the day. This is a quieter, more isolated section, with only occasional clearings and signs of seasonal herding activity.

The trek takes around 5 to 7 hours, covering approximately 8 to 10 km, depending on trail conditions and river crossings. The terrain remains varied, with steady ascents, uneven forest paths, and sections that require careful movement, especially after rain or landslides.

By late afternoon, we reach Sallaghari (2,820 m), a remote forest campsite surrounded by thick vegetation and bamboo groves. With no permanent settlement, it offers a simple and atmospheric stop deep in the wilderness. Overnight stay at a tented camp.

▮ **Day 9: Trek to Italian Base Camp (3,660 m) : Walking Distance: 8 km | 4 – 5 hours**

Leaving Sallaghari, the trail gradually leaves the dense forest behind and begins to open into a wider, more alpine landscape. The route follows the Myagdi Khola upstream, passing through sections of bamboo, scattered clearings, and increasingly rugged terrain where the valley walls rise more sharply on either side. This is a transitional day, where the wilderness begins to feel more raw and glacial in character.

The trek takes around 5 to 7 hours, covering approximately 7 to 9 km, depending on trail conditions and river crossings. The path includes steady ascents, occasional rocky sections, and exposed stretches where the landscape becomes more barren as we gain elevation.

By late afternoon, we reach Italian Base Camp (3,660 m), a broad glacial basin surrounded by towering peaks and hanging ice walls. The campsite offers a dramatic first close-up view of the Dhaulagiri range, marking a significant step into high-altitude terrain. Overnight stay at a tented camp.

▮ **Day 10: Acclimatization day**

We spend the day at Italian Base Camp (3,660 m), allowing the body to properly adjust to the higher altitude before continuing deeper into the Dhaulagiri region. This is an important rest day, though we remain active with short exploratory walks around the glacial basin to support acclimatisation.

The surrounding landscape offers striking views of Dhaulagiri's ice walls, hanging glaciers, and surrounding peaks. Depending on conditions, we may take a short hike toward nearby viewpoints, gradually gaining and descending altitude to help the body adapt more effectively.

The remainder of the day is spent resting at camp, preparing equipment, and reviewing the route ahead with the guide team. Overnight stay at Italian Base Camp.

▮ **Day 11: Trek to Dhaulagiri Base Camp (4,700 m): Walking Distance: 9 – 11 km | 6 – 8 hours**

We leave Italian Base Camp and enter the heart of the high glacial system, where the trail climbs steadily over moraine ridges and ice-carved terrain. The route passes through a series of established high camps, including Swiss, French, and Japanese Camp, each marking stages of progression deeper into the Dhaulagiri Glacier basin.

The trek takes around 6 to 8 hours, covering approximately 9 to 11 km, depending on snow and glacier conditions. The walk is slow and demanding, with uneven ground, altitude effects, and continuous changes in terrain as we move through one of the most remote sections of the entire route.

By late afternoon, we reach Dhaulagiri Base Camp (4,700 m), set directly beneath the immense west face of Dhaulagiri I. The campsite sits in a vast amphitheatre of ice, rock, and glaciers, offering a powerful sense of scale and isolation. Surrounded by towering peaks and shifting ice formations, it is one of the most dramatic high-altitude environments in the Himalayas. Overnight stay at a tented camp.

▮ **Day 12: Trek to Hidden Valley (5,140 m) via French Col (5,360 m): Walking Distance: 7 – 9 km | 7 – 9 hours**

From the base camp, the route continues into one of the most demanding high-altitude sections of the entire traverse. We begin a steady climb across glacial moraine and snow-covered slopes, where the terrain becomes increasingly exposed and the surrounding peaks feel closer with every step.

The trek takes around 7 to 9 hours, covering approximately 7 to 9 km, depending on snow conditions, weather, and group pace. The ascent to French Col (5,360 m) is the most technical section of the day, involving sustained uphill travel over steep snow and glacier terrain where careful footing and steady rhythm are essential.

After crossing the pass, we descend into the vast basin of Hidden Valley (5,140 m), a remote high-altitude amphitheatre surrounded by distant ridgelines and expansive silence. We arrive at camp by late afternoon, in one of the most isolated and striking environments of the entire route. Overnight stay at a tented camp.

▮ **Day 13: Trek from Hidden Valley to Yak Kharka (3,680 m) via Dhampus Pass (5,240 m): Walking Distance | 9 – 11 km | 7 to 9 hours**

We leave Hidden Valley early and begin a long day of descent and traverse across high alpine terrain. The route first climbs gently toward Dhampus Pass (5,240 m), crossing open slopes of scree and snow where the landscape remains stark and exposed, with vast views back toward the Dhaulagiri range and the surrounding high peaks.

The trek takes around 7 to 9 hours, covering approximately 9 to 11 km, depending on snow conditions and trail stability. After crossing the pass, we begin a steady descent into increasingly green terrain, moving from glacial surroundings into alpine meadows and open grazing land as we lose altitude.

By late afternoon, we arrive at Yak Kharka (3,680 m), a seasonal pasture area used by local herders. Surrounded by wide open hillsides and distant mountain views, it offers a welcome

return to a more stable and sheltered environment after the high mountain crossing. Overnight stay at a tented camp.

▮ **Day 14: Trek to Jomsom (2,670 m): Walking Distance | 18 – 20 km | 6 – 8 hours**

From Yak Kharka, we begin a long and steady descent that gradually takes us out of the high alpine world and into the dry valleys of Mustang. The trail moves through open hillside paths and river corridors, passing scattered seasonal settlements and wide, wind-shaped landscapes where vegetation becomes increasingly sparse.

The trek takes around 6 to 8 hours, covering approximately 18 to 20 km, depending on trail conditions and route variations. It is a continuous downhill walk, though the distance feels substantial as the route follows the natural curves of the valley and crosses extended sections of barren terrain.

By late afternoon, we arrive at Jomsom (2,670 m), the administrative hub of the region, set along the Kali Gandaki Valley. Known for its strong winds and striking mountain backdrop, Jomsom offers a more settled environment after days in remote high-altitude terrain. Overnight stay at a teahouse.

▮ **Day 15: Fly to Pokhara (822 m)**

Early in the morning, we board a short and scenic mountain flight from Jomsom to Pokhara. As the aircraft soars above the dramatic Kali Gandaki Valley, we enjoy breathtaking views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges along with the world's deepest gorge carved by the Kali Gandaki River. After landing in Pokhara, we transfer to our hotel and take some time to relax. In the evening, we stroll around the lively Lakeside area, enjoying the serene atmosphere by Phewa Lake. We may also visit popular attractions such as Mahendra Cave, Davis Falls, and the Peace Stupa, making the day both relaxing and memorable.

Overnight stay at a hotel.

▮ **Day 16: Drive from Pokhara to Kathmandu (1,400 m): 7 – 8 hours drive**

After breakfast, we begin our scenic drive from Pokhara to Kathmandu along the picturesque Prithvi Highway. The journey takes approximately 6–8 hours, depending on road and traffic conditions. As we follow the winding road beside the Trishuli River, we pass through charming villages, terraced hillsides, and lush green landscapes, offering beautiful views throughout the drive. Upon arrival in Kathmandu, we transfer to our hotel and relax after the long but rewarding journey. In the evening, you may explore the vibrant streets of Thamel or enjoy a traditional Nepali dinner. Overnight stay at a hotel.

□ **Day 17: Farewell and final departure**

After breakfast in Kathmandu, you will have free time depending on your flight schedule. If time allows, you may take a short walk around the hotel area or do some last-minute shopping in the city.

At the appropriate time, we transfer you to Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu (1,400 m) for your onward journey. This marks the end of your Dhaulagiri Circuit Trek, taking with you lasting memories of the mountains, valleys, and cultural landscapes experienced throughout the journey. We sincerely thank you for being part of this adventure and wish you safe travels home, carrying with you lasting memories of the mountains, the people, and the spirit of Nepal.

Alternative: YOU CAN ALSO TAKE A DOMESTIC FLIGHT FROM POKHARA TO KATHMANDU. THE DURATION OF THE FLIGHT IS ABOUT 30 MINUTES. ONE-WAY FLIGHT COSTS AROUND 125 USD PER PERSON. WE CAN MAKE A FLIGHT RESERVATION FOR YOU. PLEASE LET US KNOW.

What's Included:

- ☒ Airport Pick-up and drop Service
- ☒ Hotel Accommodation in Kathmandu (twin sharing basis) with breakfast
- ☒ Guided Tour of Kathmandu valley with an experienced tour guide
- ☒ Hotel accommodation in Pokhara (twin sharing basis) with breakfast
- ☒ Sightseeing charges and Entry fees
- ☒ One way flight from Jomsom to Pokhara
- ☒ Accommodation during the trek (teahouse / guesthouse / homestay)
- ☒ All meals during trek (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)
- ☒ Transportation (tourist coach / local bus / private vehicle)
- ☒ Experienced licensed English-speaking trekking guide
- ☒ Local government Entry Permit of Rs. 2000 (started in 2018)
- ☒ Insurance of the Guide and Porter
- ☒ Annapurna Conservation Area Permit
- ☒ TIMS (Trekking Information Management System) Trekking Permit Card
- ☒ Medical kits carried by the guide
- ☒ All necessary paper works, office service charge and all Government Taxes

Optional Add-Ons:

- ☒ Porter (cost: 20 USD per day, carries 15 – 20 kg load. Porter's accommodation, transport and meal is paid by the company)
- ☒ Down jacket, all-season sleeping bag, duffel bag and trekking map (in case you don't have your own. Down jacket, sleeping bag and duffel bag must be returned after completion of the trip).

What's Excluded:

- ☐ Travel insurance (Mandatory: Should include emergency evacuation coverage while trekking up to 5500+ m)
- ☐ International airfare and Visa costs (you can get Visa upon arrival at the airport)
- ☐ Domestic flight from PKR to KTM
- ☐ Personal interest items or gears
- ☐ Tips to guide / driver / porter
- ☐ Lunch and dinner in Kathmandu and Pokhara
- ☐ Extra night accommodation in Kathmandu and Pokhara in case of early arrival, late departure, and early return from the mountain (due to any reason) than the scheduled itinerary
- ☐ Beverage and Drink Items / Other Extra facilities like hot shower during trek
- ☐ Any other expenses which are not mentioned in "What's Included" section

Important note:

This note represents the most current information for this itinerary and may supersede any information in the current brochure, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control. We do our best to provide you the best available services but at the same time ask for your understanding to be flexible, in case of unpredictable conditions.

Thank you for choosing Trekadviser, Nepal as your travel partner. We wish you a very pleasant stay in Nepal.