

Dhaulagiri East Icefall Trek: A Journey Through Sacred Lakes and Glacial Giants

Overview:

The Dhaulagiri East Icefall Trek is a remote and newly explored trekking route in western Nepal that leads into the less-visited eastern flank of the Dhaulagiri massif (8,167 m). Known for its raw alpine scenery and minimal tourist traffic, the trail offers a genuine wilderness experience combining mountain landscapes, traditional Magar villages, sacred lakes, and glacial terrain beneath one of the Himalaya's most imposing peaks.

The journey begins with a drive from Pokhara to Chikhola via Beni, following the Myagdi River valley into the mid-hills of western Nepal. From Chikhola, the trail climbs steadily through terraced farmland, oak and rhododendron forests, and scattered mountain settlements. The route then ascends toward Sobang Dhuri (3,840 m), a prominent ridge viewpoint that provides the first wide-angle views of Dhaulagiri, Gurja Himal, and the surrounding western Himalayan ranges.

Beyond Sobang Dhuri, the trail enters a quieter alpine zone around Losodhap and Dhabugi, where open ridgelines and high pastures replace the forested hills. This section is characterized by long mountain traverses, uninterrupted views, and a noticeable shift into high-altitude wilderness. The cultural landscape gradually fades, giving way to vast natural amphitheaters of rock, snow, and distant glacier systems.

A major highlight of the route is Kalivaraha, a high Himalayan basin known for its panoramic setting and spiritual importance. The area is home to three sacred alpine lakes Kalivaraha, Pahavaraha, and Nilivaraha, each distinct in color and revered by local communities. These lakes sit in a dramatic high-altitude environment surrounded by ridges and grazing grounds, forming one of the most unique cultural and natural sections of the trek.

From Kalivaraha, the route continues across moraine fields and glacial terrain toward the Dhaulagiri East Icefall (4,750 m). The final approach is defined by increasingly rugged landscapes dominated by ice formations, glacial debris, and the massive eastern face of Dhaulagiri. At the icefall, trekkers are rewarded with close-range views of active glacier systems and the towering ice walls descending from the upper slopes of the mountain.

After time spent at the icefall viewpoint, the route retraces through Sungurthala and descends back toward the lower villages, completing a full traverse of one of Nepal's least developed and most visually striking trekking corridors.

Quick facts:

Cost: USD per Person

Destinations: Chikhola / Sobang Dhuri / Kalivaraha / Dhaulagiri Icefall Camp / Sungurthala / Pokhara

Duration: 12 Days

Trek starting point: Chikhola

Trek ending point: Sungurthala

Grade: Challenging

Transportation: Private Vehicle / Public Jeep

Accommodation: tea house, tourist standard hotel in Kathmandu

Max altitude: 4,750 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**

After breakfast at the hotel, our guide will meet you at the hotel and provide a briefing about the upcoming trek, including the itinerary, safety information, and important preparations. He will also assist you with all the necessary trekking formalities and paperwork.

After the briefing, we will go on a sightseeing tour around the Kathmandu Valley, visiting famous UNESCO World Heritage Sites such as Boudhanath Stupa, one of the largest Buddhist stupas in the world, and Swayambhunath Stupa, also known as the Monkey Temple. On this day, we will also arrange the TIMS card and other required permits for the trek. In the evening, you will have time to prepare your trekking gear and make the final arrangements for the journey ahead.

Overnight at the hotel.

▣ **Day 3: Drive from Kathmandu to Chimkhola (1,700 m) via Beni : Walking distance: 300 km | 10 – 12 hours**

After an early breakfast in Kathmandu, we set off toward Chimkhola via Beni, gradually leaving behind the Kathmandu Valley and entering the rolling mid-hills of central Nepal. The drive follows the Prithvi Highway, passing through terraced farmland, riverside settlements, and small towns that reflect everyday life in rural Nepal.

As the route continues westward, it runs alongside the Trishuli and Kali Gandaki river valleys, where deep gorges, cascading waterfalls, and distant mountain views create a constantly changing landscape. After reaching Beni, the gateway to the Dhaulagiri region, the journey shifts to a more rugged mountain road, heading north by jeep toward Chimkhola.

The off-road section passes through remote hillsides, forests, and traditional Magar villagesⁱ before arriving at Chimkhola (approximately 1,700 m). After about 10–12 hours of driving, covering roughly 300 km depending on road and weather conditions, we reach this peaceful mountain settlement. Known for its warm hospitality and rich Magar heritage, Chimkhola offers an authentic cultural introduction to the Dhaulagiri region, including traditional music such as Naumati Baja and a glimpse into everyday highland life.

Overnight stay at a teahouse in Chimkhola.

▣ **Day 4: Trek from Chimkhola to Bokchya / ThuloKhara (2,900m) : Walking Distance: 10 – 12 km | 5 – 6 hours**

The trek from Chimkhola to Bokchya begins with a gradual ascent through beautiful terraced farmland, dense forests, and traditional Magar settlements. Leaving behind the peaceful village atmosphere of Chimkhola, the trail follows quiet mountain paths surrounded by rhododendron forests, small streams, and stunning views of the surrounding hills and valleys.

As the trail climbs higher, trekkers experience the untouched natural beauty and authentic rural lifestyle of the Dhaulagiri region. Along the way, local shepherd huts, grazing areas, and occasional Himalayan views add to the charm of the journey. The peaceful surroundings and less-crowded trails make this section of the trek especially rewarding for nature lovers and those seeking an off-the-beaten-path Himalayan experience.

After approximately 5 – 6 hours of trekking, covering around 10 – 12 km, we arrive at Bokchya, located at an elevation of approximately 2,900m. Surrounded by forests and open hillsides, Bokchya offers a peaceful overnight stop with beautiful mountain scenery and a true wilderness atmosphere as the trek gradually moves into higher alpine landscapes.

Overnight Stay at a teahouse.

▣ **Day 5: Trek from Bokchya to Sobang Dhuri (3,840 m): Walking distance : 8 – 10 km | 5 – 6 hours**

The trek from Bokchya to Sobang Dhuri is one of the most scenic sections of the journey, gradually ascending through dense rhododendron forests, alpine meadows, and open ridgelines. As the trail climbs higher into the remote Himalayan wilderness, trekkers are rewarded with increasingly spectacular mountain views and a peaceful atmosphere far from crowded trekking routes.

The route passes through beautiful highland landscapes and grazing areas used by local herders during seasonal migrations. Along the way, the surrounding scenery becomes more dramatic, with panoramic views of deep valleys, rolling hills, and snow-covered Himalayan peaks appearing throughout the trek.

After approximately 5 – 6 hours of trekking, covering around 8 – 10 km, we reach Sobang Dhuri (3,840m), one of the major highlights and best viewpoints of the trek. From this spectacular ridge, trekkers can enjoy breathtaking panoramic views of Dhaulagiri and the surrounding Himalayan ranges, especially during sunrise and sunset when the mountains glow in golden light.

The peaceful alpine environment and magnificent Himalayan scenery make Sobang Dhuri an unforgettable overnight stop on the journey toward Dhaulagiri Base Camp.

Overnight stay at a teahouse.

▮ **Day 6: Trek from Sobang Dhuri to Loso Dhap (4,000 m): Walking distance: 8 – 10 km | 5 – 6 hours**

As we begin the trek from Sobang Dhuri to Loso Dhap, the trail gently unfolds across high alpine ridges and vast open landscapes, gradually leading us deeper into the remote wilderness of the Dhaulagiri region. Leaving behind the breathtaking viewpoint of Sobang Dhuri, we step into a world of silence, where only wind, wide horizons, and distant Himalayan peaks accompany the journey.

As we continue along the route, the landscape transforms into expansive alpine meadows and rugged high-altitude terrain, with uninterrupted views of Dhaulagiri and the surrounding snow-clad ranges. This section of the trail offers a rare sense of solitude, where the raw beauty of the Himalayas feels both powerful and deeply peaceful.

After approximately 5 – 6 hours of trekking, covering around 8 – 10 km, we arrive at Loso Dhap, situated at an elevation of approximately 4,000 m. Set within a wide alpine basin, this remote campsite offers a quiet and scenic resting place, surrounded by dramatic mountain landscapes and crisp high-altitude air.

As we settle into Loso Dhap, the journey continues to build anticipation for the higher wilderness ahead, moving ever closer to the majestic realm of Dhaulagiri Base Camp.
Overnight stay at a tented camp.

▮ **Day 7: Trek to Loso Dhap to Dhabugi (4,300 m): Walking distance: 6 – 8 km | 5 – 6 hours**

As we begin the trek from Loso Dhap to Dhabugi, the trail continues through the remote high alpine wilderness of the Dhaulagiri region. Leaving the quiet basin of Loso Dhap, we gradually ascend and traverse across open ridgelines and expansive highland terrain, where the sense of isolation and raw Himalayan beauty becomes even more pronounced.

As we move forward, the landscape opens into wide alpine meadows and rugged slopes, with continuous views of Dhaulagiri and the surrounding snow-covered peaks. The trail here is peaceful and untouched, offering a true sense of high-altitude wilderness far from any settlements.

After approximately 5 – 6 hours of trekking, covering around 6 – 8 km, we arrive at Dhabugi, situated at an elevation of approximately 4,300m. This remote campsite sits in a vast alpine environment, surrounded by dramatic Himalayan scenery and crisp mountain air, making it a perfect resting point before continuing toward the higher glacier regions.

As we settle into Dhabugi, the journey moves closer to the grand alpine and glacial landscapes leading toward Dhaulagiri Base Camp.
Overnight stay at a tented Camp.

▮ **Day 8: Trek from Dhabugi to Kalivaraha (4,550 m): Walking Distance: 5 – 6 km | 4 – 5 hours**

As we begin the trek from Dhabugi to Kalivaraha, the trail gradually leaves behind the remote high camp and ascends into one of the most sacred alpine zones of the entire journey. The route climbs steadily across open ridgelines, rocky highland terrain, and wide mountain slopes, with increasingly expansive views of the Dhaulagiri range and surrounding Himalayan peaks.

As we gain elevation, the landscape transitions into high alpine basins marked by broad panoramas, sparse vegetation, and a strong sense of altitude. The presence of Dhaulagiri and its surrounding peaks remains constant throughout this section, while the terrain becomes more exposed and rugged. After approximately 4–5 hours of trekking, covering around 5–6 km, we reach Kalivaraha (approximately 4,550 m), a significant high point of the route.

Kalivaraha is known for its spiritual importance and dramatic setting. From the main campsite, the sacred Kalivara Lakelies within the immediate area, while Pahalivara Lake and Nilivara Lake require additional side hikes of around 30–40 minutes each. These lakes, each with distinct natural colors and cultural significance, are spread across the surrounding high ridges rather than clustered together.

Surrounded by vast Himalayan views and striking sunrise landscapes, Kalivaraha offers a powerful sense of isolation and spirituality. We settle here for an overnight stay in a tented camp, preparing for the final approach toward Dhaulagiri East Icefall.

▮ **Day 9: Trek from Kalivaraha to Dhaulagiri East Icefall (4,750 m): Walking distance: 7 – 9 km | 4 – 6 hours**

As we begin the trek from Kalivaraha to Dhaulagiri East Icefall, the trail gradually leaves behind the sacred lakes and alpine meadows, entering a rugged high-mountain landscape. The route follows rocky ridges and glacial terrain, offering an increasingly remote and adventurous experience as we move deeper into the heart of the Dhaulagiri region.

As the elevation increases, spectacular views of Dhaulagiri (8,167 m) and its surrounding glaciers dominate the horizon. The trail passes through moraine fields and barren alpine slopes, revealing dramatic scenery of snow-covered peaks, ice formations, and pristine Himalayan wilderness. The isolation and grandeur of the landscape make this one of the most rewarding sections of the trek.

After approximately 4–6 hours of trekking, covering around 7–9 km, we arrive at Dhaulagiri East Icefall (4,750 m). Situated beneath towering glacial walls, the site offers breathtaking close-up views of the icefall and the massive Dhaulagiri massif. Surrounded by glaciers and high peaks, this remarkable location provides an unforgettable Himalayan experience before settling in for an overnight stay at a tented camp near the icefall.

▯ **Day 10: Trek to Chimkhola via Sungurthala: Walking distance: 12 – 14 km | 6 – 7 hours**

As we begin the trek from Dhaulagiri Base Camp, the journey shifts from high-altitude wilderness to a gradual descent through the dramatic landscapes of the Dhaulagiri region. Leaving behind the glaciers, ice walls, and towering peaks at around 4,750m, we carefully descend along moraine trails and alpine slopes, retracing our steps through raw Himalayan terrain.

As we move lower, the environment gradually changes from stark glacial landscapes to alpine meadows, ridgelines, and forested sections, with continuous views of Dhaulagiri slowly fading into the distance. The trail becomes greener and more welcoming as we approach lower elevations, offering a refreshing contrast after days in the high mountains.

After approximately 6 – 7 hours of trekking, covering around 12 – 14 km, we reach Sungurthala, a key junction on the descent route. This is an important point on the trail where a hydropower operation office is located, serving the local infrastructure and nearby settlements.

From Sungurthala, the journey continues in two possible ways depending on logistics and transportation availability. If vehicles are available, trekkers can drive back to Pokhara the same day, enjoying a long but scenic return through the hills and river valleys of western Nepal. Alternatively, trekkers can continue on foot toward Chimkhola, descending further into traditional Magar villages and rural landscapes until reaching the village at around 1,700m elevation.

From the high glaciers of Dhaulagiri Base Camp to the cultural warmth of Chimkhola, this descent completes an unforgettable Himalayan journey through some of the most remote and beautiful regions of western Nepal.

Overnight Stay at a teahouse or lodge in Chimkhola.

▯ **Day 11: Drive from Chimkhola to Kathmandu (1,400 m): 10 – 12 hours**

The drive from Chimkhola back to Kathmandu marks the final leg of the journey, taking us from the quiet Himalayan foothills back to the vibrant capital of Nepal.

As we begin the descent from Chimkhola at around 1,700m elevation, the journey follows rugged mountain roads by jeep toward Beni, passing through terraced hillsides, traditional villages, and river valleys shaped by the Kali Gandaki system. From Beni, the route connects back to the main highway network and continues toward Pokhara.

As the drive progresses, we pass through Pokhara, where the landscape briefly opens into a peaceful lakeside valley before continuing east along the scenic Prithvi Highway. The road gradually follows rivers, winding gorges, hillside settlements, and green mid-hill scenery, offering a final chance to reflect on the completed Himalayan journey.

After approximately 10 to 12 hours of driving, covering around 300 km, we arrive back in Kathmandu, descending to about 1,400m elevation.

This long but scenic return drive completes the full circuit of the Dhaulagiri region, bringing trekkers from the remote wilderness of high Himalayan base camps back to the cultural heart of Nepal.

Overnight stay at a hotel.

□ **Day 12: Departure day:**

Today marks the final day of the Himalayan journey after completing the expedition through the remote valleys, alpine landscapes, sacred lakes, and high-altitude wilderness of western Nepal. After days of trekking through the untouched trails of the Dhaulagiri region, this day offers a calm and reflective transition back to everyday life.

The morning is spent in Kathmandu (1,400m / 4,593ft), with time to rest at the hotel, reflect on the journey, or enjoy a final breakfast in the city. After the silence and vastness of the Himalayas, Kathmandu feels vibrant, yet filled with memories of the mountains that have just been explored.

Later, a transfer is arranged to Tribhuvan International Airport for the onward flight. The drive takes approximately 30 to 45 minutes, depending on traffic conditions.

As the journey comes to an end, departure from Nepal carries lasting memories of towering peaks, glacier valleys, cultural encounters, and peaceful mountain trails, an experience shaped deeply by the spirit of the Himalayas.

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
- ☒ Sightseeing charges and Entry fees
- ☒ Accommodation during the trek (teahouse / guesthouse / homestay)
- ☒ All meals during the 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)
- ☒ Personal interest items or gears
- ☒ Tips to guide / driver / porter
- ☒ 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 Trekadvise, Nepal as your travel partner. We wish you a very pleasant stay in Nepal.