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Tibet: The Kangshung Face

September 19 – October 11, 2011 (23 days)

Tibet's unspoiled Kangshung Valley, dropping directly from the east face of Everest, is a remote and isolated region with magnificent panoramas of a panoply of Himalayan peaks, including three of the five highest mountains on earth: Everest, Lhotse, and Makalu. When mountaineer and explorer Sir Francis Younghusband wrote in *The Epic of Mount Everest*, he spoke of “the dazzling cliffs of Makalu and Chomolongo dropping almost a sheer 10,000 feet into the valley below and...powdered white with fresh fallen snow—a spectacle of perhaps unequalled mountain glory.” Our journey begins in the sacred city of Lhasa and travels across the vast Tibetan Plateau to Kharta, from where we head out on an 11-day hiking circuit through fabulous hidden valleys and up to the base camp used by expeditions attempting the East, or Kangshung Face, of Everest. We'll travel through luxuriant forests of rhododendron, birch, and willow trees, past sparkling lakes and yak herder's camps, across alpine meadows and glacial moraines, and throughout enjoy a dazzling feast for the eyes—the awesome peaks and glacier faces of the Himalayan giants we have always dreamed of.

TRIP DETAILS

Very challenging ▶ 11 days strenuous hiking on rocky, steep terrain at high elevation (max. 17,300', optional hike to 19,000 feet), rugged road travel; 13 nights camping, 9 nights hotels

ITINERARY

(You will likely need to leave the U.S. on September 17 or 18 depending on the routing in order to arrive in Chengdu on September 19.)

Day 1, September 19 ▶ Chengdu, China

Arrive in Chengdu, China, and transfer to the hotel.
Kempinski Hotel

Day 2, September 20 ▶ Lhasa, Tibet (11, 800')

Early morning transfer to the Chengdu airport and fly to Gongkar, Tibet. Upon arrival in Gongkar, you will be met by your local guide and driver and transferred one hour to our hotel in Lhasa, the “sacred city” of Tibet. Upon arrival, there will be a trip briefing with trip leader Cathy Ann Taylor. The remainder of the day is free to rest and acclimatize to Lhasa’s 11,800-foot elevation.
B,L,D...Kyichu Hotel

Days 3-4, September 21 & 22 ▶ Lhasa (11,800')

We have two full days to explore this wondrous city and surrounding valley. Among the monuments we visit are the 13-story Potala Palace, reputed to have as many as 1,000 rooms, with hundreds of exquisite *thangkas* (scroll paintings) and frescoes. It is the residence of the Dalai Lamas and eight of them are buried here. We also visit Sera and Drepung monasteries, as well as the Jokhang, Tibet’s holiest Buddhist temple, and walk in the Barkhor, a pilgrimage circuit around the Jokhang that also serves as Lhasa’s principal bazaar.
B,L,D each day...Kyichu Hotel

Day 5, September 23 ▶ Gyantse | Shigatse (12,792')

We drive about 5 hours to the historic outpost of Gyantse (12,956'), where we explore the octagonal 15th-century Kumbum Stupa, another mandala-shaped monastery. Its five stories represent the five steps to enlightenment and there are 108 halls with Buddha shrines and frescoes (108 is an important number in Buddhism). We continue across the Tibetan Plateau to Shigatse (12,792'), Tibet’s second largest city. En route we visit Shalu Monastery, a small temple that was once a center of scholarly learning. It was destroyed in an earthquake in 1329 but quickly rebuilt by local lords under the command of the Mongol Emperor of China, thus the style is Mongolian in nature, with sloping walls around a main courtyard. (5 hours driving.)
B,L,D...Hotel Manasarovar

Day 6, September 24 ▶ Shigatse | Shegar (14,300')

In the morning we explore Tashilhunpo Monastery, founded by the first Dalai Lama in the 15th century. Tashilhunpo contains a remarkable assemblage of artwork, including a 26-meter-tall bronze image of Buddha, *thangkas*, frescoes, and statues. We then drive over the Lakpa La (17,100') to

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mountain-ringed Shegar (14,300'), the starting point for many expeditions to Everest. (4-5 hours driving.)

B,L,D...Hotel Qomolangma

Day 7, September 25 ▶ Kharta (12,500')

On our five-hour drive to Kharta, we enjoy beautiful views from the Pang La (17,000') toward Makalu (27,817'), Lhotse (27,916'), Everest (29,035'), and Shishapangma (26,286') (weather permitting). It's a scenic journey down the Dzakaa Chu and Phung Chu valleys, the headwaters of the Arun River, toward Kharta. We meet our Sherpa staff from Nepal here. Our camp is on the banks of the Kharta Tsangpo River. (5 hours driving.)

B,L,D...Camp

Day 8, September 26 ▶ Trek to Dhombuk, Kharta Valley (14,000')

Hiking along the banks of the Kharta Tsangpo, we pass several villages in this beautiful valley. We then leave the Kharta Valley on a trail that leads up a side valley toward the Shao La. We make camp at the beginning of this climb on a ledge overlooking the valley and villages at about 13,000 feet, or continue up the valley following a small stream for another two hours to camp at Dhombuk on streamside meadows at about 14,000 feet. (4-5 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

Day 9, September 27 ▶ Shao Tso (15,300')

From Dhombuk we trek toward the Shao La pass, passing a series of lakes and reaching a stream that we follow to a lake below the pass. Camp overnight. (4-5 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

Day 10, September 28 ▶ Shao La (16,000') | Joksum (14,000')

We continue to ascend two hours on rocky terrain to reach the Shao La (16,000'), from where the views toward Makalu, Lhotse, and Everest are stunning (weather permitting). We begin a steady descent along rock-strewn slopes for about an hour, and then plunge steeply to the valley below. At once the scenery changes from barren rocky slopes to scrub with rhododendron, birch, and willow trees. We hike another hour down this fascinating valley, following a stream through thickening fir and juniper forest to our camp at Joksum (14,000'). (5-6 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

Day 11, September 29 ▶ Toward the Kangshung Valley (14,500')

The trail climbs steeply through thick juniper and rhododendron forest to reach high pastures above the Kama River. Soon, splendid views toward Everest and Lhotse are seen (if the weather is clear).

The high ridges south of the Kama River drip with hanging glaciers that are alive with roaring avalanches during the spring. Our hike traverses alpine meadows and yak herders' camps, and takes us past a serene green lake to a campsite at 14,500 feet on a large meadow with great views toward the Kangshung Valley. (5-6 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

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Day 12, September 30 ▶ Pethang (14,200')

A half-hour hike from our meadow camp brings us to a ridge over the valley where there are clear views right up the Khangshung Valley, including Everest, Lhoste, Lhoste Shar, Tshersto, Phetangste, Chomolonzo, Makalu, and a myriad of other peaks. From this ridge we descend rather steeply to the Kama River, which we must wade across. We now enter the wide Khangshung Valley, drained by the Khangshung stream the receding glacier has left behind and covered by a thick growth of willow, rhododendron, juniper, and other shrubs. We make camp at the meadow called Pethang (14,200'), about an hour's walk uphill from the stream crossing. (5-6 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

Day 13, October 1 ▶ Pethang Ringmo (16,000')

From our camp at Pethang, we hike to the end of the meadow and then climb steeply up onto a large rockslide (we'll need to take care crossing this area to ensure there is no rockfall from above). The views toward Makalu and the incredible upheaval caused by the Chomolonzo glacier are amazing. After we cross the rockslide, we follow the trail around the mountainside and reach a beautiful glade known locally as Okpa. From here we continue up the meadows of the lateral moraine with Everest and Lhotse in view to reach our camp at 16,000 feet on the grassy knolls of Pethang Ringmo. (4-5 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

Day 14, October 2 ▶ Day hike up the Khangshung Glacier (17,000')

Today we take a day hike up the Khangshung glacier up to 17,000 feet along the route used by expeditions attempting Everest. The hike is gradual along the glacial plateau formed by the lateral moraine and takes about four hours. The views from this amphitheater formed by some of the highest mountains on earth are amazing. At the head of the valley and blocking the skyline is the massif formed by Everest, Lhotse, Lhotse Shar, and three attendant smaller peaks. Across the glacier are Chomolonzo, Makalu, Pethangse, and many others. Those looking for a more strenuous day can continue up the valley to hike up a 19,000-foot peak from where one can survey the mountain and glacier landscape for even more astounding views. Hike back to camp for overnight (16,000'). Herds of blue sheep can sometimes be seen on these hillsides. (6-7 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

Day 15, October 3 ▶ Raabka Chu (13,500')

We retrace our route down the valley along the Khangshung glacier, the rockslide opposite the Chomolonzo glacier, and Pethang (where we camped on the way up) to a stream crossing called Raabka Chu at 13,500 feet. Our camp on the grassy meadow across the river is a very pleasant place to spend the afternoon. Another route to this campsite includes a side trip to Tse Chu Lake, where we visit the cave temple of Guru Rimpoche. We climb high above the Opka meadows, cross Lamtsho (16,200'), then descend steeply to the lake. Leaving, we descend steeply to the Pethang campsite from where we retrace our steps to Raabka Chu. (4 hours hiking; the side trip will take about 6-7 hours.)S

B,L,D...Camp

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Day 16, October 4 ▶ Tsho Tshurigma (16,000')

A day of uphill hiking first takes us steeply to a shelf above the river, then across relatively flat terrain to a small meadow called Pangboche, where we'll enjoy lunch. From here we climb steeply across alpine slopes to our campsite at Tsho Tshurigma (16,000'), a small but beautiful lake at the base of Langma La. There are clear views toward Makalu and Everest from here. (5-6 hours hiking.)
B,L,D...Camp

Day 17, October 5 ▶ Langma La (17,300') | Troshay (14,000')

As we head to the Langma La (17,300'), we pass another (and larger) clear aquamarine lake and traverse steeply over rocky terrain to reach the pass in just over two hours. Views of Makalu become more and more impressive as we climb upward, and Everest and all the other attendant peaks are also visible all the way to the pass. Once at the Langma La we bid our farewell to the Kangshung Valley and the impressive panorama of some of the highest mountains on earth and descend steeply over rock moraines and glaciated valleys to our camp on a grassy meadow beside a clear stream called Troshay. (6-7 hours hiking.)
B,L,D...Camp

Day 18, October 6 ▶ Kharta (12,500')

From our camp we follow the stream down the Kharta Tsangpo valley along a well defined trail through grassy hillsides used for grazing animals. Soon we come to a small rock bridge crossing and a village with its barley and potato fields ringed by willows and birch. After about two hours we reach the fork in the trail from where we climbed to the Shao La many days ago. After crossing the river below Yulba village we soon reach our riverside campsite from where we started our trek to the Kangshung Glacier. Our circuit of this fascinating trek is now complete! Overnight at camp at Kharta. (5-6 hours hiking.)
B,L,D...Camp

Day 19, October 7 ▶ Kharta | Rongbuk Monastery (16,700')

Drive from Kharta to Rongbuk Monastery, where we view the grand, rugged and starkly magnificent North Face of Everest as it looms ahead and fills up the valley on our approach. Rongbuk is reputed to be the highest monastery in the world. Camp below the monastery. (4 hours driving.)
B,L,D...Camp

Day 20, October 8 ▶ Zhangmu (7,545')

Drive from Rongbuk across the Tingri plains to meet the paved Friendship Highway. Soon we cross the 16,000-17,000-foot Thong La and Lalung passes with their superb panoramic views of the Himalaya, and quickly drop down to Zhangmu, a town close to the Nepal border and a historic trading point between Tibet and Nepal. (6 hours driving.) Overnight at hotel.
B,L,D...Zhangmu Hotel

Day 21, October 9 ▶ Kathmandu

After Chinese customs and immigration formalities at Zhangmu, we drive down to the Friendship Bridge and cross into Nepal for more border formalities. Continue to Kathmandu with a stop for lunch along the way. (5-6 hours driving.)

B,L...Hotel Shangri-La

Day 22, October 10 ▶ Kathmandu

A free day in Kathmandu to explore on your own. (This extra day also allows for any delays) This evening, enjoy a festive farewell dinner with the group.

B,D...Hotel Shangri-La

Day 23, October 11 ▶ Depart Kathmandu

Transfer to the airport and depart on homeward-bound flight.

B...

(You will arrive back in the U.S. on Wednesday October 12, 2011)

LAND COST

\$7,395 per person (6-7 members)

\$7,095 per person (8-9 members)

\$6,595 per person (10-15 members)

\$300 airfare (Chengdu-Lhasa). Subject to change due to increases in fuel costs. Cattara will book and issue these tickets for you. Cost includes airport taxes each way.

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations.

Single Supplement—\$1000 for requested singles; \$750 for forced singles. If you prefer single accommodations, you must pay the Single Supplement Fee. If you wish to share accommodations, we'll try to match you up with a roommate. If that's not possible, we will only charge you a portion of the single supplement.

*Should you choose to pay with credit card there will be a service charge of 3%, the fee we incur from the bank.

LAND COST INCLUDES...

- Expert leadership of Cathy Ann Taylor
- Accommodations in hotels (Chengdu, Lhasa, Shigatse, Shegar, Zhangmu, Kathmandu)
- All trek arrangements, including tents, foam sleeping pads, community camping and commissary equipment, services of camp and commissary crew, including camp and cook staff, yak drivers and yaks.
- Meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Airport transfers
- Sightseeing as noted in the itinerary

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- o Entrance fees for monasteries
- o Ground transportation
- o Emergency oxygen
- o Additional guides where necessary
- o Tibet permits

LAND COST DOES NOT INCLUDE...

International airfare (to Chengdu and return from Kathmandu); flight from Chengdu to Lhasa (see separate cost above); meals not noted on itinerary; trip insurance (we strongly recommend you purchase the optional trip insurance offered by Cattara, which includes trip cancellation insurance); optional tipping to your trip leader, local guide, drivers, and local staff; excess baggage charges; mainland China visa fees; Nepal visa fees; cost of medical immunizations or emergency evacuation; and items of a personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

TRIP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation25% of land cost
 120 days prior to departure25% of land cost
 90 days prior to departure.....Balance

CANCELLATION FEE SCHEDULE

From time of reservation
 until 90 days prior to departure.....25% of land cost
 89-60 days prior to departure.....50% of land cost
 59 days of fewer prior to departure.....100% of land cost

EXPERT LEADERSHIP

Expert leadership is the key to every successful trip. Cattara attracts knowledgeable and gifted leaders who are passionate about guiding trips and truly enjoy sharing the experience with others. They understand the cultures and traditions they work in and are a fountain of information. In addition to making sure everything runs smoothly and safely, Cattara guides enhance your experience by being educators, companions, and the best of friends.

Cathy Ann Taylor, a high altitude trekking guide for the last 20 years, will be leading this trek. She's trekked all over Nepal, Tibet, and Bhutan, with well over 150 trips in the Himalayas (she still considers the Himalayas her "second home")! A devout hiker and mountain biker, she leaves no trail undiscovered, and her passion for the mountains, caring nature, and boundless energy are renowned. Her experience, knowledge, positive attitude (she can find the good in anything!), and her wonderful rapport with the local staff will enhance your experience. With the help of caring and like-minded individuals she has been able to manage the sponsorship of eight remote village children, all of whom are in boarding school and one who is about to graduate from University in Australia. She consistently gets rave reviews from members of her groups and has quite a loyal following. Cathy Ann is active in the Breast Cancer Fund and has participated in eleven expeditions, including Mount McKinley, Cho Oyu, Mount Fuji, Mount Shasta, and Mount Rainier, which helped increase

awareness of breast cancer (she alone has raised over \$400,000 for the cause!). Cathy Ann's new program, Sacred Treks, which benefits the Breast Cancer Fund (Bhutan, Mont Blanc, and Peru treks) has raised over \$210,000. She has also reached the summit of Ama Dablam (22,500') in Nepal and Argentina's Aconcagua (22,834'), the highest peak in South America. Cathy Ann received an honorable mention in *Hooked on the Outdoors* magazine's Outdoor Person of the Year Awards, January 2006, and also received a letter of recognition for her fundraising and environmental work from Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.

PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS

This trip is extremely challenging and is designed for those who are very fit and experienced in the outdoors. We expect you to be a strong, experienced hiker and in great physical condition. On this trip, you will hike four-seven hours a day, up and down mountain trails that are steep and rocky, and mostly at elevations above 14,000 feet, with two pass crossings at 16,000 and 17,300 feet and an optional hike to 19,000 feet. High altitude trekking can be very physically taxing and may create discomfort. You may experience symptoms of illness that you do not experience while exercising at sea level, such as shortness of breath, restlessness or sleeplessness at night, and headaches. At 18,000 feet, there is only one-half the amount of oxygen in the air, which imposes considerable physiological stress on the body. You should be aware of the demands and risks imposed by very high altitude, be in excellent underlying health, and prepare by training rigorously. We recommend you have a thorough physical exam and evaluation to uncover any general medical problem that might flare up while trekking in the remote areas of Tibet, where medical care may be many days away.

This trek is designed to allow time for acclimatization while trying to follow a schedule that accommodates people's time constraints. Certain aspects of the trek organization and schedule that may seem illogical are designed to maximize acclimatization. For instance, once at altitude, elevation gains between camps are limited: you may climb higher during the day but descend to sleep (climb high, sleep low).

While on trek, you should drink a lot of water—this helps to avoid dehydration. The prescription drug Acetazolamide (Diamox) can also help acclimatization, prevent acute mountain sickness, and treat mild cases of mountain sickness. It is also very helpful for altitude insomnia and should be used in preference to sleeping pills or Valium, which are dangerous at altitude. Consult with your physician for advice on trekking at high altitude and any prescription medications you may need.

For physical preparation for this very challenging trek, we strongly suggest regular cardiovascular exercise for one to two hours at least 4-5 times a week. We recommend stair climbing, running, and mountain biking on hills, or elliptical or treadmill training in the gym with 10-15 pound day packs. This gets the heart rate going, which will be very beneficial for the type of high altitude trekking you will be undertaking.

LIFE ON THE TRAIL

Your trekking day typically starts at 7:00 a.m., when the camp staff will bring you "bed tea" to start the day, along with a large bowl of hot water for washing. (Bring along a washcloth and you can have a full sponge bath in the privacy of your tent!) After packing your bags, you'll enjoy a hearty

breakfast of porridge, eggs, and toast. By 8:30 or 9:00 you're off on the trail. A hot trailside lunch breaks up the day, giving you time to rest and refuel before heading out on the trail for the afternoon hike. You arrive in camp by 4:00 p.m. (sometimes earlier) and have time to wash up and get settled in your tent before enjoying tea and snacks in the dining tent. While waiting for dinner, you can write in your journal, read a book, play cards, or simply relax. The day ends with a hot, multi-course dinner, which often includes ethnic cuisine as well as American favorites. After dinner you can gaze at the stars (incredible viewing in this part of the world) and the moonlit peaks, go over the events of the day, or retire to your tent to read for a while before heading off to sleep.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

In addition to a passport, valid for at least six months beyond the date of completion of the trip, you will need visas for mainland China and Nepal. We recommend Zierer Visa Service—1-866-788-1100 or www.zvs.com.) When applying for your Chinese Visa do not mention that you are going to Tibet. We will be arranging your Tibet permits separately. A good tip is to make a photocopy of the photo page of your passport and carry it separately from your passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, a photocopy will help the local consulate speed up authorization for replacement. Also bring several spare passport photos—they're handy in case of unexpected visa or permit requirements.

Note—Most countries requiring visas require a completely blank page on which to stamp the visa, so your passport should contain at least one blank page for each country you plan to visit.

AIR TRAVEL

Airfare is not included in the land cost of the trip. For air reservations, please contact the airlines directly, either by phone or via the Internet. Plan your arrival in Chengdu by the early afternoon of Day 1 (September 19). Many travelers elect to use their “frequent flyer” miles when traveling, but please check with us before purchasing or obtaining your tickets. We need to verify your arrival and departure schedule. Note—Names on air tickets and passports must match!

MEDICAL MATTERS

No vaccinations are currently required to enter China/Tibet or Nepal, but immunizations for typhoid, tetanus, hepatitis A, and polio are *recommended*. These regulations and recommendations change frequently, so please check with your local health department or the CDC for more information (www.cdc.gov). In addition, the CDC sometimes recommends meningococcal meningitis vaccine for travelers to Nepal and Delhi, India, if there has been a recent outbreak. Confer with your physician for further advice.

Please advise us of any pre-existing medical conditions that may affect your health on the trip (recent injuries or surgeries, chronic illnesses, etc.). Hospital facilities for serious medical emergencies may be far away and evacuation can be difficult (and expensive).

To avoid intestinal problems while on the trip, do not drink tap water or even use it to brush your teeth—drink bottled water only.

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We recommend you bring your own personal first-aid kit, which should include antibiotics (Cipro or other), diamox for high altitude, pain killers, and allergy medicines if you are prone to allergic reactions. The leader will also carry a basic kit for emergencies, but will not have any prescription medications.

MONEY MATTERS

You should bring enough money for any souvenirs you may buy. Depending on how much of a shopper you are, \$500-\$600 is usually enough for incidentals and souvenirs. You should bring an additional amount for optional gratuities to the trip leader and local trekking staff. (At least US \$350 is recommended for the trip leader; at least \$200 toward a group tip for the trekking staff, preferably paid in local currency, as traveler's checks are impossible for the trekking staff to exchange.) Bring some of your money in traveler's checks and some in cash. Credit cards (Visa, MasterCard) are also accepted at some of the hotels and some of the shops in Lhasa and Kathmandu. The local currency in China/Tibet is the *Renminbi* ("people's money"), with the basic unit currency known as the *yuan*. The local currency in Nepal is the *rupee*.

WEATHER & CLIMATE

At this time of year, daytime temperatures at altitudes of about 12,000 to 17,000 feet can range between 40° to 80°F; nighttime temperatures can range between 0° to 50°F depending on the altitudes.

INCIDENTALS

Laundry: Laundry service is available at the Kyichu Hotel in Lhasa and at the Shangri-La hotel in Kathmandu, but you may just wish to hand wash a few items yourself. While on trek, wash basins are available for any laundry you may want to do yourself in the afternoon, but it's usually too late or cold for garments to dry very quickly. Synthetic fabrics are the easiest to wash, and they dry quickly. Please make sure you bring biodegradable soap.

Electricity: Tibet and Nepal are on the 220V system. Sockets are usually the three-pin variety, but they vary. If you are planning to use something like a hairdryer or electric shaver, bring a converter and a selection of plug adapters (you can buy these in drugstores or travel specialty stores in the U.S.).

Time Zones: Tibet is 15 hours ahead of California and 12 hours ahead of New York. That means if it's 8:00pm in Lhasa, it's 8:00am in New York and 5:00am in California. Nepal is Greenwich Mean Time plus five hours and 45 minutes, so if it's 8:00pm in Kathmandu, it's 9:15am in New York and 6:15am in California.

Environmental Responsibility: We ask you to carry out whatever you carry in, including non-biodegradable items such as batteries, flashlight bulbs, empty plastic containers, and so on. Tibet does not have the proper facilities to process this kind of waste and your throwaways will end up in the river or tossed down a hillside.

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SHOPPING

Lhasa and Kathmandu are fun places to shop—street vendors and emporiums are everywhere you look. Craft items to buy include beautiful hand-woven Tibetan carpets, sweaters, brass and copperware, semi-precious gemstones, Tibetan prayer wheels, and *thangka* paintings. You'll need to sharpen your bargaining skills to get the best deal.

WHAT TO BRING: CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT LIST

Packing Notes

It's best to go as light as possible and take only the essentials. Excess baggage can be a burden, not only to you but to support personnel.

Your trekking duffel must not weigh more than **30 lbs.**, because it will be carried by yaks and they often throw loads if they are too heavy. This includes all items you will need while on trek as well as your sleeping bag.

Luggage

- Duffel bag. A good size is about 14" x 15" x 36" (7,560 cu. in)—large enough to hold your sleeping bag plus your trekking clothes and gear. It should have a full-length zipper (for easy access), and be sturdy and water-resistant or waterproof.
- Daypack with a capacity of 2,000 to 2,500 cubic inches, with a good padded waist belt. It can double as your carryon bag. Always bring all irreplaceable items, such as camera, medications, important documentation, and trekking boots in your carryon luggage.
- Spare roll-up duffel. This is essential if you wish to bring home those great souvenirs!

Clothing Notes

Because you will be going to higher elevations, the weather will be cold part of the time. Nighttime temperatures are likely to fall below freezing many nights in a row; sometimes even daytime temperatures (at least in the shade) can be close to freezing.

Bring comfortable clothing that will protect you from cold and wet weather. Synthetic fabrics (such as polypropylene, capilene, or fleece) are the most effective barriers against the cold. They provide the best insulation, are light in weight, wick away perspiration, and dry quickly if wet. Wool and wool/synthetics are also suitable. (Cotton garments are not good in cold or wet mountain conditions.)

Layering is the way to go. Your innermost layer should be long underwear. The middle layer can be a synthetic turtleneck or wool shirt, and pants. The outermost layer should be a synthetic or down jacket, and/or a good quality Gore-Tex wind/rain parka and over-pants.

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We suggest men and women trek in comfortable, loose-fitting long pants. It is culturally insensitive to wear skin-tight pants or skimpy shorts and tops—please do not go bare-chested or show any signs of nudity.

We haven't included quantities for each item listed. Use your own judgment, based on the expected weather conditions, your personal needs, and the overall weight restrictions for your luggage.

Underwear

- Regular underwear. Synthetics are easier to wash and dry. Depending on the weather, you may be able to hand-wash some on your rest days during the trek.
- Thermal underwear (one light weight, one medium weight, and one expedition weight), top and one light weight, and one medium weight bottom, of a polyester-type fabric. Wool and wool/synthetic blends are also suitable. You can use them to sleep at night and as layers for maximum warmth.

Socks

We recommend you bring three outer pairs and four inner pairs of socks.

- Medium weight hiking socks (synthetic or wool/synthetic).
- Synthetic or silk sock liners--optional. Some people wear sock liners to help prevent blisters, and some wear the same pair of hiking socks for three days in a row and achieve the same result.
- Athletic socks (synthetic for easy washing and drying) that are suitable for your walking (not hiking) shoes

Shirts

- Long-sleeved, synthetic or wool shirts.
- Short-sleeved, synthetic T-shirts (for warmer days).

Pants

- Full-length pants, preferably of quick-drying synthetic fabric.
- Fleece pants, ideal for camp time or layering for warmth.

Outerwear

- Medium-weight jacket of synthetic fabric, such as fleece.
- Medium-weight down or synthetic-fill jacket (10-12 oz. of down or 15-20 oz. of fiberfill). A must for camp.
- Rain/wind shell (must fit over bulky clothing).
- Rain/wind pants, preferably with full-length side zipper (must fit over your other pants).
- Gloves or mittens (fleece or combination of fleece with waterproof shell overmitt or glove).
- Glove liners (synthetic).

Head Gear

- Sun hat with wide brim, preferably with a chin strap to keep it from blowing off.

- Balaclava for warmth at night. The combination of a warm hat and neck gaiter also works well.
- Fleece or wool hat.
- Bandanna. A generally useful item—it will keep your neck from getting sunburned and can double as a hand towel in the field.

Footwear

Please break new boots in well before the trip.

- Medium-weight, all leather hiking boots with padded ankle, good arch support, and lug sole for traction. Your hiking boots should be waterproofed, well broken in, and suitable for prolonged walking on snow and/or rocks.
- Camp shoes, either down booties, slip on warm clogs, or tennis shoes (optional).
- Ankle, or knee-high, gaiters to keep pebbles and scree (and sometimes snow) out of your boots.
- Comfortable walking shoes for Lhasa and Kathmandu.

Sleeping Gear

- Expedition weight sleeping bag. We recommend a rating of -10° to -25°F.
- We provide thick foam sleeping pads, but for added comfort, you may wish to bring your own lightweight pad. #

Other Items

- Water bottles, 1 or 1.5 quart capacity. Make sure they are leak-proof, and heavy duty. Bring 2 and mark them with your name or initials as several people may have the same bottle.
Note—CamelBaks or other bladder hydration systems are not recommended, as they often break or leak, are difficult to fill with boiled water, and are hard to keep clean.
- Hiking sticks—optional but highly recommended. They help relieve the impact on your knees during long downhills; they are also useful on uphill. Practice with them before the trip.
- Parachute cord to use as a clothesline inside your tent.
- Set of casual city clothes that are dressier than your trekking clothes.
- Toiletry kit—biodegradable soap, toothbrush, etc. Women should bring any feminine products they need because they're not readily available locally.
- Roll of toilet paper (1 or 2). Toilet paper is provided at camp, but you need to carry your own on trek during the day.
- Purell hand sanitizer for quick hand washing and hygiene (a must!).
- Personal medical kit.
- Throat lozenges (antiseptic menthol or hard candies), about 30 of them. Good for soothing sore or dry throats at altitude.
- Body lotion for dry skin at higher altitudes.
- Small towel of synthetic-type fabric.
- Sponge or washcloth to wash up at camp.
- Ace bandage or brace if you're prone to sore knees or ankles.

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- Sunglasses (100% UVA/UVB protected). For high altitudes, it's good to have glasses with a special dark lens and side shields that block reflected UV.
- Spare pair of prescription glasses, prescription sunglasses, or contact lenses.
- Sunscreen lotion and lipstick of SPF 25 or higher (UVA and UVB protection).
- Small headlamp with spare batteries.
- Ziploc bags are great for small items and camera gear; nylon stuff sacks are also handy.
- Heavyweight plastic garbage bag to use as a waterproofing liner inside your duffel and daypack (Kangshung area can get a lot of rain)
- Small padlocks or combination locks for your duffels.
- Extra passport photos. Keep them with your travel documents as you may need them throughout your journey.
- Swiss Army-type pocket knife.
- Money belt or neck pouch to store cash.

Optional Travel Accessories

- Camera and plenty of memory cards and extra batteries.
- Repair kit with needle, thread, and safety pins.
- Pair of compact binoculars.
- Powdered electrolyte mixes for your water.
- Your favorite trail snacks or candy.
- Reading and writing material.

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