

Mt. Kailash via Simikot Trek

Trip code	
Package name	Mt. Kailash via Simikot Trek
Duration	22
Max. elevation	4790 m
Level	DIFFICULT
Transportation	Domestic and International flight (Kathmandu - Nepalgunj - Simikot, Lhasa - kathmandu)
Accommodation	3***hotel , Lodge + tent twin sharing bed basis during the trek
Starts at	Kathmandu
Ends at	Kathmandu
Trip route	Kathmandu - Nepalgunj - Simikot - Sali khola - Muchup - Sipsip - Hilsa - Manosaravar - Tarbuche - Dirpuk - Zutul puk - Darchen - Paryang - Saga - Shingaste - Gantse - Lhasa - kathmandu.
Cost	USD 5,500 per person

Highlights

Overview

Simikot – Mount Kailash Trekking provides an opportunity to experience both Nepalese and Tibetan Culture. A stone pillar that marks the Nepal/Tibet border is just across a rickety wooden bridge, perhaps one of the most informal border crossings in the world.

Simikot – Mount Kailash tour is a prime route linked to a far western region of Nepal. The trail follows a gradual climb up with mixed of cultural inhabitant areas. The route follows The Karnali River valley

which is one of the beautiful nature trails for nomad caravan journeys. As this is located at a high altitude in a very remote area, it requires a special permit.

To start our journey, we have to take an hour's flight from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj, the Southern border of Nepal. Then on the next day, we fly from Nepalgunj to Simikot (218 km), 50 50-minute flight. Simikot lies at a height of 2910m in the Humla District. There are no direct flights from Kathmandu to Simikot. If you want to walk to Simikot, then it takes about 15 days to walk from Surkhet.

You can view the Saipal Himal 7031 meters from the left side of the plane as you approach Simikot; you may also be able to spot Rara Lake some distance off to the right. Tourism-related facilities are relatively undeveloped in this area although several organizations are working to establish community-based opportunities between Simikot & border. The attractions likely to be of interest to trekkers beyond Simikot lie in the rugged scenery & the scattered traditional villages with a significant mountain range, Saipal Himal.

The trail follows a gradual climb up with mixed of cultural inhabitant areas. In lower elevation areas you have lush green wish landscapes sceneries and upper valley semi-Tibetan type of vegetation zone. The Chinese border guards in the post on the ridge above the Humla Karnali will want to see your passport and Chinese visa. Hereafter you can make your trip to Mt. Kailash or to the old city of Lhasa. Mount Kailash, located in the far west corner of Tibet is the most sacred peak of Asia.

The beauty of the 6700-meter-high Mount Kailash, which looks like a symmetrical cone-shaped rock capped by pure crystalline ice all the time, is echoed in various mythological and literary works. Hindu pilgrims consider the mountain to be the home of their God-Lord Shiva. For Buddhists, Mount Kailash is said to be the Center of the Universe-the axis mundi in Asian cosmology. Every year hundreds of pilgrims travel from all over the Indian sub-continent and Tibet to make the ritual circumambulation around the mountain in their quest for enlightenment and this trek will join them on their journey.

The return to Nepal can be via the Simikot or Kodari border posts, or you can fly from Lhasa to Kathmandu. The total duration for this trip can be 22 days, depending on walking distance, weather conditions, and place to visit. Flight to Simikot or fly back from Simikot is more weather-dependent and it is better to use one way only since you need to follow the same trail on the way back.

Trip Itinerary

Day 1 : Fly from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj – 1 hr flight.

Our journey begins with a scenic one hour flight from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj, a border between Nepal and India in the southern part of Nepal. It is a busy crowded city which lies close to the Indian border. You can also drive from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj by bus which takes about sixteen hours. You could do shopping in around the city where you can find goods in a cheaper price. Overnight at hotel in Nepalgunj.

Day 2 : Fly to Simikot (2960 m) trek to Dhara Pokhari (2300 m).

On the following day, we fly from Nepalgunj to Simikot. We have to fly north for about 50 minutes to Simikot, the headquarters of Nepal's most remote district, Humla. The landing at the tiny mountain airstrip at Simikot is an unforgettable experience. Upon arrival, we commence our trek, climbing up from the airstrip on a rocky trail passing fields of barley and wheat. We then ascend a forested ridge above the town of Simikot, before making a long steep descent past Danda phoya. We can find walnut and apricot trees throughout our trail, until we come to the scattered village of Dhara pokhari which is divided by the Yakba Khola. After lunch, we'll visit the Norbulingka, the summer palace of the Dalai Lama, as well as the Jokhang Temple. This temple is possibly the most sacred shrine in Tibet and there is always a procession of devout Tibetans through the complex. Surrounding the Jokhang is the Barkor – a maze of narrow cobbled streets which is the central market of Lhasa.

Day 3 : Trek from Dhara Pokharai to Salli Khola (2700 m).

From Dhara Pokhari, our trail is a bit steep until we cross a long slope and follow the river to a waterfall near the shepherds' camp at Chachera. We then climb over a ridge and bypass the village of Kermi before entering a big valley with walled fields of potato and buckwheat. After walking through a sparse pine forest we descend from the ridge to the Salli Khola and camp by the river. Overnight at Salli Khola.

Day 4 : Trek from Salli Khola to Muchu (2920 m).

Leaving Salli Khola, we continue our trail to Muchu. Crossing the river, we then climb over a rocky ridge before descending to the grey waters of Humla, Karnali. Then we can see a goat herders camping by the river in a sandy meadow after crossing another ridge. The valley gradually narrows and we cross several more ridges, passing the villages of Yalbang and Yangar. The trail then winds its way precariously above the river before we cross a suspension bridge to the village of Muchu. Overnight at Muchu.

Day 5 : Rest day at Muchu.

Our first rest day will be at Muchu. You can simple relax on this day of walk around Muchu. This day is best for acclimatization too. We can explore the valley around Muchu and explore the village with its stone houses and Gompa.

Day 6 : Trek to Sipsip (4330 m).

After a day rest at Muchu, we move forward and follow the trail over a ridge to the Tumkot Khola. Continuing our trial , we walk along the rocky stream bed for a short distance before beginning a steep climb through a rock-filled gully. We then pass through Palbang and its bright yellow mustard fields to the small settlement of Yari and beyond here the route climbs up the valley towards a pass, the Nara Lagna. We spend overnight below the pass in a meadow known as Sipsip.

Day 7 : Trek to Hilsa (3720 m).

Today, we have a very steep ascend to the top of Nara Lagna (4580 m). Then our trail descends. On the route, we can have the view of the Tibetan Plateau before arriving at the village of Ranipauwa. Walk carefully, since you may slip and slide on a surface of loose pebbles down to the Humla Karnali. Overnight stay in Hilsa.

Day 8 : Trek to Taklakot (3930 m), drive to Mansarovar (4560 m) .

Leaving Hilsa, we commence our trek to Taklakot. We have to cross the Nepal -Tibet border which is marked only by a stone pillar. This might be the most informal border crossing you might see throughout your life time. Taklakot is the large trading center from where you will be driven to Mansarovar, the most venerated of Tibet's many lakes. It is a rough fantastic drive that gives a taste of what lies ahead. It is an incredible drive past the snow capped peak of Gurla Mandata (7728m) as the road climbs higher onto the Tibetan Plateau. In places the road is no more than the tracks of vehicles that have passed this way before. Today you will be sent to the highest lake of fresh water with turquoise complexion in the world. It is full of fishes and swans. Holy Kailash Parbat, Mt. Gurula-Mandala, Lake Rashekshi are lying on its surrounding. The region is considered rich for gold and other mines, hot springs and hundreds of wild living creatures. You pass through Tibetan villages where prayer flags flutter from the roofs of the whitewashed houses. Overnight at Mansarovar.

Day 9 : Rest at Mansarovar.

You will be spending a day in Mansarovar allowing your bodies to acclimatize to the altitude and exploring this fascinating place. We will visit the picturesque Chiu Monastery on the North West shore of the lake with the imposing sight of Mt Kailash in the background. The scenery is stunningly beautiful with panoramic views of the Himalayas.

Day 10 : Drive to Tarboche (4750 m).

After a day rest at Mansarovar, we leave the lake and continue our journey to Tarboche. Tarboche is marked by a tall pole adorned with prayer flags. This is the starting point for our Kora, the 53km trek around the mountain and is the site for Tibet's most important annual Saga Dawa festival. We drive for about 35 kilometers towards Mt Kailash. Overnight at Tarboche.

Day 11 : Trek to Dira-puk (4909 m).

Leaving Tarboche, we walk up to the Lha Chu Valley through beautiful green meadows and streams with Mt Kailash towering above us. It is one of the exciting days walking along the beautiful rocky cliffs; waterfalls with some clouds in the clear blue sky making you feeling that Great God Shiva is everywhere with tons of blessing to you. Continuing up the valley, the north face of Kailash comes into view before we reach the 13th century monastery at Dira-puk.

Day 12 : Trek to Zutul-puk (4790 m) .

Commencing trek from Dir-puk, we now leave the Lha Chu Valley and enter the Drolma Chu Valley, heading up towards a high pass, the Drolma La [5630m]. It's a tough climb to the summit which is festooned with prayer flags but from there it is all downhill or flat to Zutul-puk, with views of one of the highest lakes in the world, Thukpe Dzingbu Lake, known as the Lake of Compassion. As well as the monastery at Zutul-puk, there are several meditation caves and another cave containing an image of Milarepa.

Day 13 : Trek to Darchen (4560 m).

Throughout the trail today, we are treated to magnificent views of Kailash. We cross several streams, and follow an impressive gorge. We then enter the Bharka plain and it's about an hour's walk through this desert-like landscape to Darchen.

Day 14 : Drive to Paryang (4750 m).

The drive today is very long. We have to drive around 300 kilometers to reach Paryang. Along the way, we cross the Mayun-la and make several river crossings. The scenery along this section is some of the most panoramic views of the entire journey. Overnight at Paryang.

Day 15 : Drive to Saga (4600 m).

Today's drive is also very long but not so long as compared to the previous day. We continue driving today along a 255 kilometers stretch of road to Saga, passing through the small, dusty town of Zhongba en route. Overnight at Saga.

Day 16 : Drive to Shigatse (3900 m).

Today is the longest drive of our journey, 452km to Shigatse. Leaving Saga, we pass the turn-off for the northern route and skirt around a lake, passing through a series of valleys. Approaching Kaga, we'll come across the first trees and agricultural fields that we've seen for many days and the town itself is situated next to a picturesque lake. We continue on to Lhatse where we join the paved Friendship Highway and follow it for the final 150km to Shigatse, the second largest city in Tibet. Overnight at Shigatse.

Day 17 : Sightseeing & drive to Gyantse (3950 m).

Wake up early this morning for a sightseeing tour in Shigatse. Today, we visit the Tashilhunpo Monastery, one of the largest functioning monasteries in Tibet, before driving 90km to Gyantse. Once we reach Gyantse, we can explore the Pelkor Chode Monastery and the Gyantse Kumbum. The Kumbum is a large gold-domed stupa and its many chapels house an impressive array of Tibetan Buddhist murals. Overnight at Gyantse.

Day 18 : Sightseeing & drive to Lhasa (3650 m).

Leaving Gyantse, we drive 261 kilometers towards Karo la (5045 m). You will be treated with an awesome sight of a huge glacier tumbling down to within a few hundred metres of the road. Beyond the small, developing town of Nagartse, the road follows the bank of a beautiful turquoise lake, the Yamdrok-tso, for about 20km. We then cross the Khamba La (4794 m) and continue on to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 19 : Sightseeing in Lhasa .

We will spend our following day by visiting several Lhasa's monasteries in the company of a guide and interpreter. One of these is the Sera Monastery, which is one of the best preserved monasteries in Tibet. Within its white-washed walls and golden roofs, several hundred monks live and study. After lunch we'll visit the Norbulingka, the summer palace of the Dalai Lama, as well as the Jokhang Temple. This temple is possibly the most sacred shrine in Tibet and there is always a procession of devout Tibetans through the complex. Surrounding the Jokhang is the Barkor – a maze of narrow cobbled streets which is the central market of Lhasa. Overnight in Lhasa.

Day 20 : Sightseeing in Lhasa .

This morning we will visit the Potala Palace which dominates the city of Lhasa. A spectacular building, it contains the private quarters of the Dalai Lama as well as numerous grand state rooms and many important chapels. There has been a palace on this site since 5th or 6th century, but the present palace was constructed in the 17th century. A visit to the Drepung Monastery this afternoon will complete a truly awe-inspiring day. Founded in the 14th century, this monastery was once the largest in the world with a population of around 10,000 monks. These days that figure is down to several hundred, but there is still much here of interest as it was left relatively unscathed during the Cultural Revolution. Overnight in Lhasa.

Day 21 : Free day in Lhasa.

Our final day in Lhasa is a day at leisure in which we are free to explore further, revisit a favorite monastery or simply sit in a café overlooking the Barkor and watch the pilgrims as they circumambulate the Jokhang, stopping regularly to peruse the merchandise at the stalls lining the route. There is also the option of an additional tour to places such as the Tibetan Medical Centre, Ganden Monastery and Tsurphu Monastery, but this will incur extra costs. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 22 : Fly to Kathmandu (1400 m).

On the last day of our journey, we leave Lhasa early in the morning. We drive two hours to reach Gonggar Airport and take a flight from Lhasa – Kathmandu. You will fly right across the main Himalayan range and the mountain which will have the spectacular views. Upon arrival, transfer to your respective hotel.

Inclusions

What is included?

- Domestic and international airport transfer as per the program by private vehicle
- Accommodation for 1 night in Nepalgunj on room sharing basis with breakfast
- Special permit of Simikot
- Accommodation on room sharing basis at Guest Houses & Camping Tents as per itinerary
- Support truck for the entire trip.
- 4500 Model Luxury Japanese Land cruiser jeep in Tibet (4 Person in 1 Land cruiser Basis)
- Tibet Section, hotel on Bed and Breakfast basis
- English-speaking Tibetan guide.
- All necessary porter charges during trekking in Nepal side
- Yak and Yak handler during your trek around Kailash.
- All camping equipment such as sleeping/dining/kitchen/toilet tents, sleeping mattresses, and sleeping bags
- Service of one Nepali Team Leader, experienced Sherpa staff, and assistants
- Accommodation, meals, insurance, equipments, allowances and transportation of all support staffs.
- Airfare of Kathmandu / Nepalgunj (current airfare is USD 138 per person which is subject to change without prior notice by airlines)
- Airfare of Nepalgunj / Simikot (current airfare is USD 127 per person which is subject to change without prior notice by airlines)
- Airfare of Nepalgunj / Simikot for Nepali staff
- Cargo fee for trekking equipment
- Kailash permits and entrance fees.
- Tibet/China visa
- Basic first aid kit.
- Oxygen,
- Sightseeing tours in Lhasa as per the program
- Entrance fee wherever applicable during sightseeing in Lhasa.
- Hotel accommodation in Lhatse, Shigatse, Gyantse and Lhasa in a standard hotel with breakfast.
- All applicable government taxes (13% VAT) and 10% service charges.

What isn't included?

- Any Lunch and Dinner in Tibet and Kathmandu
- Lunch and dinner in Nepalgunj during your stay at hotel
- Lunch and dinner in Lhatse, Shigatse, Gyantse and Lhasa
- Any support staffs from Lhatse
- Bottled drinks (any cold drinks, and alcoholic drinks).
- Expenses of personal nature such as telephone, bar bill, tips for driver, guide and porter, etc.
- Travel Insurance
- Nepal re-entry visa fee.
- Extra expenses incurred due to unforeseen circumstances such as sickness, accidents, road blockage, and other occurrences beyond our control.
- Liability for insurance against sickness, accidents, loss of baggage, loss of life etc.
- Any other cost not mentioned above as included.

Complimentary