



## Inquiry

✉ info@gurkhaencounters.com

☎ 977 1 4267882

# Helambu Circuit Trek

**'Amidst rich mid-hills culture in the shade of the Jugal Himalayan range.'**

## Introduction

This trek makes a wonderful circuit of the Helambu region. The normal starting point for this trek is Sundarijal because of its proximity to Kathmandu. The Helambu region is less frequented by trekkers than other regions like that of Everest or Annapurna.

Helambu, one of the most beautiful regions in the foothills of the Himalayas, is just a few days away from the Kathmandu Valley rim, situated directly northeast of Kathmandu in the central Himalayan region.

This trek takes you through the Langtang region and joins at Helambu. The Langtang area was declared a National Park in 1976 and remains the second largest national park in Nepal, covering 1710 sq. km. of mountainous terrain south of the Nepal-Tibet (China) border.

The area offers you the chance to immerse yourself in a broad range of cultures. The three main ethnic peoples living in the area are the Tamangs, Bhotias and, Yolmus. The Yolmo people of the Helambu region are often referred to as "Sherpas;" however, neither their languages, customs, nor clan structure resemble that of the Solu-Khumbu Sherpas of Everest. They are thought to be more akin to Langtang Bhotias, and may also have originated from the Kyirong area of Tibet, just over the border.

Their religion and monasteries show their rich Buddhist culture. At lower elevations along the edges of the park, other mid hill tribes and castes reside including Bramins, Chhetries, Newars and some Gurungs.

### TRIP PROFILE

<b>Total duration</b>	13 Nights & 14 days
<b>Trek Grade</b>	Moderate.
<b>Trek Duration</b>	8 nights 9 days.
<b>Max Elevation</b>	3,510 m. at Tharepati.
<b>Mode of Trek</b>	Teahouse basis.
<b>Trek Start</b>	From Sundarijal.
<b>Trek Ends</b>	At Melamchepul.

### TRIP DEPARTURES

<b>Spring-summer-autumn (Every Year)</b>	19th January to 01st February.
	16th February to 29th February.
	15th March to 28th March.
	12th April to 25th April.
	20th September to 03rd October.
	11th October to 24th October.
	08th November to 21st November.
	06th December to 19th December.

## OUTLINE ITINERARY

**DAY 01** Arrive in Kathmandu. Transfer to the hotel.

**DAY 02** Full day, guided sightseeing tour in the Kathmandu Valley.

**DAY 03** Drive from Kathmandu to Sundarijal (1,460 m.) Trek to Chisopani: (2,195 m.) 5 hrs.

**DAY 04** Chisopani to Kutumasang: (2,470 m.), 6-7 hrs.

**DAY 05** Kutumasang to Tharepati: (3,510 m.).

**DAY 06** Tharepati to Melamchigaon: (2,530 m.), 3-4 hrs.

**DAY 07** Melamchigaon to Tarkegyang: (2,560 m.), 3-4 hrs.

**DAY 08** Rest Day at Tarkegyang.

**DAY 09** Tarkegyang to Sermathang: (2,621 m.), 4-5 hrs.

**DAY 10** Sermathang to Melamchi Pul: (840 m.), 5-6 hrs.

**DAY 11** Drive to Dhulikhel Mountain Resort. 2 hrs.

**DAY 12** Drive from Dhulikhel to Kathmandu.

**DAY 13** Free day in Kathmandu.

**DAY 14** Transfer to the airport for final departure.



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## Trip Dossier

### DAY 01 Arrive at Kathmandu. Transfer to Hotel.

Upon arrival at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport, you will be greeted by our staff, who will escort you to the hotel, where our Sherpa guide or office staff will give you a brief orientation about the hotel, Kathmandu itself, trekking, and the do's and don'ts of the area. They will also review any additional information that you might require while in Nepal, including an overview of the next day's sightseeing tour. In the evening, you will enjoy a complimentary welcome dinner at one of the finest traditional Nepalese restaurants in Kathmandu, with the necessary transfer to and from the hotel. Overnight at hotel.

### DAY 02 Full-day, guided sightseeing tour in the Kathmandu Valley.

After your breakfast, you will proceed to Kathmandu Durbar Square, where you will tour the ancient palace, the temple of the Kumari, the living goddess of Nepal, Hanuman Dhoka, and Kastamandap temple with a guide knowledgeable about Nepalese history, architecture, and religion. From there, you will proceed by taxi, bus to the Buddhist site, Swoyambunath Stupa, also known as the "Monkey Temple" because of its lively troops of resident monkeys. You will then visit Pashupatinath Temple, the holiest shrine for Hindus, situated on the banks of the holy Bagmati River, a popular cremation site. Before returning to the hotel, you will visit Boudhnath Stupa, a Buddhist pilgrimage center and home to many colorful gompas, or monasteries. Once back at the hotel, you will receive a briefing about the trek and have a chance to meet your guides and ask any last minute questions before tomorrow morning's departure. Overnight at hotel.

### DAY 03 Drive from Kathmandu to Sundarijal (1,460 m.). Trek to Chisopani: (2,195 m.), 5 hrs.

A few hours drive through the eastern suburbs of the Kathmandu Valley takes you through the famed site of Boudhanath, renowned for its enormous Buddhist chaitya or stupa, adorned with the ever-present, all-seeing mystical eyes of Lord Buddha. After stopping at Boudhanath, the drive diverts to a dirt road for an hour towards Sundarijal, meaning "beautiful water," a lovely spot with cool patch of forest with monkeys and fresh streams. Sundarijal is a picnic spot used by people from Kathmandu who want to escape the busy crowded metropolitan life in the city for a day. In the early days, it used to be a summer residence for the aristocratic Rana rulers. The bungalow left is now used for scout training. Here, the trek begins with a climb up to the rim of the Kathmandu Valley, through terraces of rice and millet, and then through a delightful forest of rhododendron. As you continue to climb, you eventually reach a high ridge offering excellent views of the Ganesh and Langtang Himal. You stop at Chisopani for the overnight so that you can take advantage of the sunrise over the eastern Himalaya. Chisopani is a scenic spot at the top of the hilltop, with 4-6 teahouses and an army camp nearby, as well as lovely mountain scenery.

**DAY 04** Chisapani to Kutumasang: (2,470 m.), 6-7 hrs.

You begin your journey with a morning drive of 25 kilometers on a good road with gorgeous scenery, passing through the scenic villages of Naudanda, Kanre, and Lumle, all the way to Nayapul. At Nayapul, our adventure begins in a warm, subtropical region; the walk follows the Modi River upstream to Birethanti, and then follows the east bank of Bhurungdi Khola, with scenery of rushing waterfalls and tall, green forests. Lunch will be served at Ramghai. We will stop overnight at Tikhedhunga village, where you can enjoy the cool splash of cascading waterfalls. Walking distance is about four hours.

**DAY 05** Kutumasang to Tharepati: (3,510 m.)

You begin by climbing a steep, eroded trail above Kutumasang, passing mostly through fir and rhododendron forests where there are no permanent settlements. Then the trail descends to Magen Goth (3,150 m.). It finally reaches Tharepati for the overnight stay. Tharepati, situated at 3,510 m., is the highest point of this trek and it's worth the climb for the grand views of the snow-capped peaks, ranging from Langtang, Ganesh Himal, Manaslu, and Annapurna to the far west and the Jugal mountain range to the northeast. The trail from here also branches off to the west. It is another one and half day walk to the popular pilgrimage site of Gosainkund.

**DAY 06** Tharepati to Melamchigaon: (2,530 m.), 3-4 hrs.

The trek continues downhill from Tharepati towards Melamchigaon through a beautiful forest of oak and rhododendron. It passes the northern end of Tharepati and descends steeply down a ravine. After crossing a river via suspension bridge, the trail makes a short final climb to reach the prosperous Sherpa village of Melachigaon for the overnight stay. This village is famed for its wood carving, and you can see the intricate carvings on the windows of the houses.

**DAY 07** Melamchigaon to Tarkegyang: (2,560 m.), 3-4 hrs.

The walk from Melamchigaon is on a gradual path for an hour and a half before ascending to Tarkegyang. Tarkegyang is the main village of the Helambu region, renowned for its green apples and the wood carving on furniture and other household items. You will have ample time to visit this lovely village. The homes of the inhabitants are amazingly clean, with polished wooden floors and spick and span utensils.

**DAY 08** Rest Day at Tarkegyang.

A well deserved rest day, free from the hassles of packing! Today you can visit the village and its nearby monastery, as well as take a short hike to the top of the nearby hills for more great views of the snow-capped peaks.



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### DAY 09 Tarkeyang to Sermathang: (2,621 m.), 4-5 hrs.

After a lovely morning, you head towards Sermathang, another important village in the region. The walk leads on a gradual winding path, offering excellent views of the surrounding landscape all the way to the overnight stop at Sermathang.

### DAY 10 Sermathang to Melamchi Pul: (840 m.), 5-6 hrs.

The last day of the trek is more or less downhill all the way to Melamchi Pul Bazaar. The trek passes through the mid-hills villages of Kakani and Thimbu before heading towards the subtropical region filled with rice paddies.

Melamchi Pul is a busy bazaar where people from the rural hill villages come for the market or to catch a bus to Kathmandu. Here, you will have the last camp of this wonderful trek.

### DAY 11 Drive from Melamchi Pul to Dhulikhel Mountain Resort. 2 hrs.

The drive from here is on a dirt road for few hours until it joins the main Tibet-Nepal Arniko Highway. From here, a pleasant, scenic drive brings you to the mountain resort at Dhulikhel for the overnight. Dhulikhel is an old Newar town situated beyond the eastern rim of Kathmandu Valley en route to Tibet and Jiri, the classic gateway to Everest. As Dhulikhel offers a panoramic view of the central and eastern Himalayan ranges, it is one of the most popular tourist spots and has comfortable lodges and resorts.

### DAY 12 Drive from Dhulikhel to Kathmandu.

A short scenic drive of an hour brings you back to Kathmandu.

### DAY 13 Free day in Kathmandu.

A free day in Kathmandu. Please let our staff know if you would like to go on another short tour in and around the Kathmandu Valley or if you would like to extend your stay for few days and join in on one of our extension trips, including white-water rafting, paragliding, or bungee jumping.

### DAY 14 Transfer to the airport for final departure.

Keep the departure time of your international flight in mind, and make sure to keep your confirmed air ticket, departure tax (in local currency), and passport handy! Our staff will keep the departure time of international flight in mind, and make sure to keep your confirmed air ticket, departure tax (in local currency), and passport handy! Our staff will take you to the airport for your final departure from beautiful Nepal. take you to the airport for your final departure from beautiful Nepal.



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**Note:** The above itinerary should be taken only as a guideline; it is always possible to encounter changes due to weather, availability of clean water and campsites, trail issues, or any other unforeseen conditions.

## Complimentary Services

Services as mentioned below are rendered complimentary upon confirmation of your booking with us:

- a. Complimentary tourist registration to respective consulate office or embassy
- b. Complimentary international flight ticket re-confirmation
- c. Complimentary Gurkha Encounter T-Shirt (subject to availability)
- d. Complimentary welcome dinner in one of the finest local restaurants in Kathmandu with cultural shows presented by different ethnic groups
- e. Complimentary use of sleeping bags and down jackets

## Mode of Payment

To confirm your trip we request you an upfront payment of 40% of the quoted amount by authorizing the same with your credit card details filled up in our GE Booking Form.

### If you pay by cheque/ bank draft pls make it payable to:

Gurkha Encounters Pvt. Ltd.  
G P O Box: 20195  
Ganeshman's Building  
House No.: 135  
Chaksibari Street, Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Phone: +977 1 4267 882 and 889  
Fax: +977 1 4267 854

**Note:** If you pay by Master/Visa cards there is a bank service charge of 3.5% which will be charged as an extra; for payment through American Express there is a 5.5% bank service charge.

## Terms & Conditions

- ❖ The Company is not liable for any refunds after the departure date of the scheduled itinerary.
- ❖ Cancellation should be made 48 hours before departure and a 40% cancellation charge is approved besides tax, transportation and permit. See specific information below
- ❖ No refund will be given if the program ends before the provided itinerary date.
- ❖ The Company is not to be held responsible for your early termination of a trek should our experienced leader feels it is unsafe for you to continue due to fitness and/or health issues

- ❖ The Company is not liable for an unconvinced or rescheduling due to natural, political or bureaucratic circumstances
- ❖ The Company is not responsible for delays caused by local weather conditions resulting in international flights being missed
- ❖ The Company is not responsible for the financial implications of rescue. Please ensure you have the appropriate insurance to cover these situations before you arrive in Nepal
- ❖ Our staffs are very experienced in leading treks at all altitudes. It is their responsibility to ensure your safety, their conclusions regard safety are final and should you not follow their advice the Company can not be held responsible for the outcome.

If you wish to cancel your trip for any reason the following scale of charges will apply:

<b>Date of Cancellation</b>	<b>Charge Incurred</b>
2 months before departure	Loss of deposit (40% of Total Trip Cost TTC)
29 days to 2 months before departure	50% of TTC
10 to 28 days before departure	70% of TTC
Less than 10 days before departure	100% of TTC

## Equipment List (General Items)

- A pair of light hiking boots
- A pair of sandals
- 2 pairs of woolen socks and 2 pair of hiking socks
- 1 medium poly pro shirt
- 1 pile jacket
- 1 down jacket
- 1 woolen hat
- A pair of sunglasses
- A pair of glove shells with liner or ski gloves (opt.)
- A pair of woolen gloves
- One Trekking pack 3000 cubic inches capacity
- One Sunscreen lotion SPF 10 to 30 and One Sunscreen stick SPF 10 to 30
- Two Reading books (Optional)
- One Walkman (Opt) and Music tapes (Opt) iPods Digi Camera and its Charger
- A one liter water bottle
- A pair of Trekking poles
- One flash light with 4 sets of batteries
- one -5 to -20 sleeping bag



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Two T-shirts and one long sleeve T/city shirt

Two Trekking baggy pant

## **Toiletry Items**

Towel, pre-moistened novelettes, wash cloth, lip balm, and any additional personal items such as toothbrush, comb, etc.

## **Miscellaneous Items**

Photo equipment with plenty of films and spare batteries, reading/writing materials, postcards of hometown and/or photos of home and family to share with Nepalese people, safety pins, sewing kit, zip lock bags for small items.

## **Welcome to the Himalaya**

Namaste and welcome to the stunning and diverse geographical regions of the Himalaya.

This wonderful place is home to many of the highest mountains in the world including the world's highest, majestic Mount Everest, to some of the deepest gorges, lush valleys, great rivers, colorful people and ancient histories. You'll find a wide and fascinating diversity of landscapes, culture, people and activities within the Himalaya. From stunning scenery to vibrant and colorful culture, from the serenity and spiritualism of ancient temples and monasteries to the thrills and spills of some of the finest white water rides, from the challenge of the awesome peaks to the laid back relaxation of the valley, lakesides and quiet hill stations to the deep lush jungles of the lowlands, from romantic and intricate courtyards, exotic palaces and exquisite restaurants to high snowy passes where prayer flags flutter in the skies and from the solitude of the great peaks to the welcoming bustle and warmth of the local bazaars and courtyards. Whatever your interest, the Himalaya has something to offer everyone.

Gurkha Encounters is a leading trekking, adventure and eco travel company based in Kathmandu, Nepal and established in 1988. We specialize in the Himalayan regions of Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan and India, including Sikkim. Our services include advice, planning and organization of a wide range of adventure and trekking travel options and related services including: trekking and climbing expeditions among the world's highest peaks; jungle safaris; white-water rafting; mountain biking; family adventures; educational expeditions for schools and youth groups; short breaks, guided tours and sightseeing; special interest holidays; romantic breaks; volunteer placements and corporate services.



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Our office staff, guides and other support staff are all from local villages and towns in the Himalaya and are all experienced and qualified professionals. Our extensive local knowledge as well as our experience and local contacts mean that we are able to provide the best service to you and we are proud of our reputation for quality, innovation and overall customer service with a focus on cultural and environmentally responsible travel. We aim to provide you with an excellent, friendly and personal service at competitive and fair prices for a truly memorable adventure travel experience.

## **Small Group Travel**

Most of our trips, treks and tours are organised on a small group basis, usually with a maximum of 16 persons in a group. On family holidays the maximum number is 20 to allow a number of families to join a group. By keeping numbers small we are able to offer a friendly, personal and high quality service.

## **Tailor Made Private Charter Adventures**

We offer a very competitive complete tailor made service and are happy to design private charter programs for individuals and for groups as well as to tailor any of our packages to more closely meet your requirements. We have a wealth of experience in helping many clients in designing and planning individual adventures, ranging from romantic breaks to personal challenges, fundraising programs, student programs to extreme adventure expeditions, from low budget to no expense spared. We don't charge a fortune to tailor make a trip for you and we have plenty of ideas, suggestions and experience we're happy to share. We'll work closely with you to design your adventure. Our advertised brochure prices will give you an idea of what you can expect to pay but we'll provide individual quotes based upon your itinerary, requirements, budget and number of people traveling.

Let us take care of the research and arrangements for your flights, accommodation, guides, transport, permits, peak fees, equipment requirements, food and all ground handling service for treks, expeditions or tours, using our local knowledge, expertise and contacts. And you can get on with enjoying yourself.

## **Group and Club Organisers**

If you are organising a trip for a group or a club we will offer one free\* additional place for every 10 bookings made. You can use this for your own travel, use it to reduce the overall cost of the trip for everyone or perhaps offer it as a fantastic prize for your group members or for a charity. Contact us for more details and for conditions (\* permit fees, national park entry fees, airfares and departure taxes not included).



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## **Contact Us**

We are always happy to provide more information and suggestions. If you are in Kathmandu, please visit our office in Thamel, Kathmandu. You can email us at [info@gurkhaencounters.com](mailto:info@gurkhaencounters.com), or telephone us on +977 1 4267 882 and 889 or fax on +977 1 4267854 or contact to our Managing Director (RAJ) Mobile +977 9851022717 / 9851082548. For general information please visit our website [www.gurkhaencounters.com](http://www.gurkhaencounters.com)

**'Tapai lai Hardik Swagat Cha' - Welcome from our heart to the mighty Himalaya.**

## **Trekking in the Himalaya**

The Himalaya mountain regions provide some of the finest trekking routes available anywhere. Within the Himalaya, Nepal's mountainous, hilly and lowland Terai regions offer some of the most spectacular trekking in the world. Treks vary from high altitude routes some of which visit base camps used by mountaineering expeditions to easy short treks within the Kathmandu Valley and lower hill country where you'll travel through pretty villages, subtropical lowlands, vast meadows and forests, fast flowing rivers, deep canyons and even the cold and barren regions at the feet of the great mountain peaks. The views change with the seasons, with different stages of planting and harvesting cycles in the villages and valleys and the brilliant display of wild flowers in spring and autumn.

Trekking with us means an adventure walking holiday, with a small group of other trekkers, led by an experienced and professional English speaking local guide. We use professionally trained and experienced local Sherpa guides or Sirdars on our treks, tours and expeditions and are totally confident in their ability and experience. Local guides are integral to providing you with the best travel experience. Not only can they share local knowledge and insights, at the same time as you travel you are contributing to the local economy and supporting local communities at the same time as you travel. Whatever route you choose, you'll be sure to meet local people and enjoy stunning landscapes as you walk at your own pace through well established village trails. Whilst some of the popular trekking trails are used by climbing expeditions on their approach marches, most have been used for hundreds of years by the local Nepalese for everyday travel and trade.

### **Teahouse Trekking**

On the more popular treks in Nepal, particularly in the Everest, Langtang and the entire Annapurna regions, enterprising villagers have built teahouse lodges, similar to European style alpine lodges offering simple but comfortable accommodation and food. We offer a selection of single/twin sharing rooms in the best available lodges run to a high level of service. We also supply a four season sleeping



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bag and cotton liner free of charge on our teahouse treks. Hire of other key items if needed can be arranged in advance. During the trek you'll have 3 meals a day, with a mixture of European and Asian style dishes and large portions. Soft drinks, sweets, mineral water and alcohol are not included.

### **Fully Provisioned Camping Style Trekking**

This type of trek is staffed by a full Sherpa crew including a Sirdar (head man), cook and assistants. Porters, yaks, horses or mules carry your main baggage. It is the Sherpa crew's job to perform all the camp work, from setting up to providing freshly made meals, to leaving the site clean on departure. We provide twin share dome or A frame sleeping tents, a kitchen tent, mess tent and toilet tent. We also provide tables, chairs or stools, lanterns/candles, thin sleeping mattresses and all crockery and cutlery as well as a fully equipped kitchen set up. The Sherpa crew will cook, wash up, and provide hot water for washing and tea and coffee at night and for your wake up call. Food is a mixture of Asian and Western dishes, with lots of choice, freshly prepared. As with teahouse trekking you can expect 3 main meals each day. Soft drinks, sweets, mineral water and alcohol are not included.

A few of our teahouse treks involve crossing high passes and necessitate camping for a couple of nights. We provide full camping services for these nights including providing four season sleeping bags.

### **Our Grading System**

In Nepal, the trails often zigzag with plenty of ascents and descents and it is better to think in terms of hours spent walking rather than miles covered. A typical day's walking is from five to seven hours with a number of ascents and descents. This includes a one hour lunch stop, a comfortable pace of walking and time to enjoy your surroundings.

We use four grades for our treks, intended to give you a general sense of what to expect and to help you choose which adventure will suit you best. Factors such as weather conditions, altitude, fitness level, experience, interests and how you feel on a particular day all contribute to how easy or strenuous you find a trip. If you're unsure of whether a trek is suitable for you just contact us before making your booking.

**Wish you have memorable time with us!**