

MANASLU TREKS AND EXPEDITION · FIELD GUIDE

Manaslu Circuit Trek Itinerary: Complete Route Planning Guide

Day-by-day routes from 10 to 22 days — written from real experience on the trail,
not from a guidebook shelf.

Larke Pass 5,106 m

10–22 Day Options

Restricted Area Permit

Tsum Valley Extension

What Is the Manaslu Circuit Trek?

The Manaslu Circuit Trek follows the Budhi Gandaki river valley in a complete loop around Mount Manaslu (8,163 m), the eighth highest peak on earth. The route passes through remote Gurung and Tibetan-speaking villages, climbs over Larke Pass at 5,106 metres, and ends in the Annapurna region near Dharapani or Besisahar. It is one of the few remaining trekking circuits in Nepal where you still walk through villages that see relatively little foot traffic compared to the Annapurna or Everest regions.

Unlike the Annapurna Circuit, the Manaslu route requires a restricted area permit, which means you must trek with a registered agency and a licensed guide. This keeps group sizes manageable and the cultural fabric of the villages more intact. From our experience running groups through this region since 2003, the permit system has been one of the main reasons Manaslu still feels like the Nepal of 25 years ago in places like Tsum Valley or the upper reaches near Samdo.

The duration of a Manaslu Circuit trek typically ranges from **10 to 22 days**, depending on where you start, how many acclimatization days you build in, whether you include Tsum Valley, and how far the jeep road has advanced on your visit. Road construction is ongoing in this region, and the driveable starting point shifts. Currently, most groups begin trekking from Soti Khola or Machha Khola. Some parties arriving

from Besisahar on the Annapurna side do the circuit in reverse, which changes the acclimatization profile significantly — and not always for the better, as we explain below.

5,106 m

Larke Pass Altitude

177 km

Approx. Route Length

10–22

Day Range Options

8,163 m

Mt. Manaslu Height

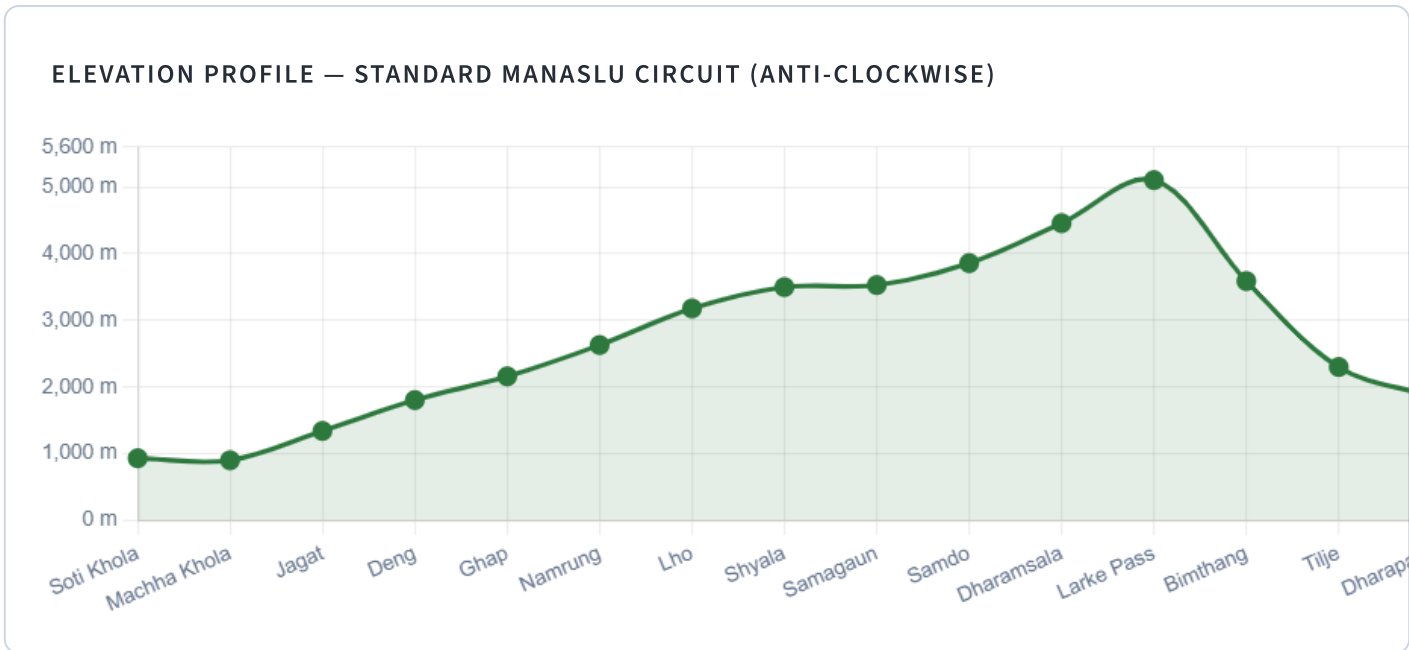
Standard Manaslu Circuit Route Overview

The classic Manaslu Circuit follows the Budhi Gandaki river upstream from the lowlands around Soti Khola or Machha Khola, climbing steadily through deep gorges, subtropical forest, and eventually into the high alpine zone. After crossing Larke Pass, the trail descends through Bimthang into the Marsyangdi valley, finishing at Dharapani or continuing to Besisahar.

Route at a Glance

Start Point	Soti Khola (930 m) or Machha Khola (900 m) — by jeep from Arughat
Key Villages	Jagat → Deng → Ghap → Namrung → Lho → Shyala → Samagaun → Samdo → Dharamsala → Larke Pass → Bimthang
Larke Pass	5,106 m — the highest and most critical point on the route
End Point	Dharapani (1,860 m) or Besisahar (760 m) — by jeep or local bus to Kathmandu
Direction	Anti-clockwise (Soti Khola to Dharapani) is standard and better for acclimatization
River Valley	Budhi Gandaki upstream; Marsyangdi downstream after the pass
Best Seasons	March–May and October–November

The anti-clockwise direction — starting from the lower Budhi Gandaki and crossing Larke from east to west — gives trekkers a gradual altitude gain profile. You spend roughly 8–10 days climbing from 900 m to above 5,000 m, which is the right pace for most people. Groups who do the route in reverse (starting from Dharapani, crossing Larke east to west, then descending the Budhi Gandaki) often arrive at high altitude too quickly and face acclimatization problems we'd rather avoid.



10-Day Short Manaslu Circuit Trek Itinerary

A 10-day itinerary is tight. It works only for physically fit trekkers who have recently been at altitude, have no history of altitude sickness, and understand the risks of moving fast at elevation. We generally do not recommend this schedule for first-time high-altitude trekkers. That said, there is real demand from trekkers with limited leave, and the route is doable if done carefully. The road to Machha Khola cuts the first day of walking, which makes 10 days achievable.

10-Day Manaslu Circuit Trek		Fast Pace · Fit Trekkers Only
DAY 1	Kathmandu → Machha Khola Drive ~8-9 hrs · Overnight 900 m	900 m
DAY 2	Machha Khola → Jagat ~5-6 hrs walking · Good trail through gorge	1,340 m
DAY 3	Jagat → Deng ~5-6 hrs · Checkpoint at Jagat, trail narrows	1,804 m
DAY 4	Deng → Namrung ~6-7 hrs · Long day, altitude begins to bite	2,630 m
DAY 5	Namrung → Samagaun	3,530 m

	~6–7 hrs via Lho and Shyala · Open valley, Manaslu views	
DAY 6	Samagaun — Acclimatization Hike to Pungyen Gumpa or Manaslu Base Camp · rest here	3,530 m
DAY 7	Samagaun → Samdo ~3 hrs · Short but important for altitude gain	3,860 m
DAY 8	Samdo → Dharamsala (Larke Phedi) ~4 hrs · Last teahouse before pass	4,460 m
DAY 9	Dharamsala → Larke Pass → Bimthang Early 3–4 AM start · ~8–9 hrs total · Most demanding day	5,106 m
DAY 10	Bimthang → Dharapani → Kathmandu ~4 hrs walk, then jeep/bus · Long travel day	1,860 m

Guide note: In this 10-day version, the Deng–Namrung push on Day 4 is the hardest single day. Many trekkers underestimate how tired they will be after three consecutive full days of walking with altitude gain. If anyone in your group shows signs of struggle on Day 4, build in a rest day at Namrung — it will save the pass day later.

11-Day Manaslu Circuit Trek Itinerary

Adding one day over the 10-day version gives you meaningful breathing room. We typically insert the extra night at Namrung or split the long Deng–Namrung section at Ghap. This prevents the fatigue pile-up that leads to problems higher on the route.

11-Day Manaslu Trek Itinerary		Moderate Pace · Recommended Minimum
DAY 1	Kathmandu → Machha Khola Drive · overnight at local lodge	900 m
DAY 2	Machha Khola → Jagat ~5 hrs walking · river crossings, mani walls	1,340 m

DAY 3	Jagat → Deng ~5–6 hrs · checkpoint, suspension bridges	1,804 m
DAY 4	Deng → Ghap ~5 hrs · rhododendron forest, first Buddhist gompas	2,160 m
DAY 5	Ghap → Namrung ~5–6 hrs · altitude starts to feel real above 2,500 m	2,630 m
DAY 6	Namrung → Samagaun via Lho ~6–7 hrs · open yak pastures, first Manaslu views	3,530 m
DAY 7	Samagaun — Rest Day Hike to Manaslu Base Camp (4,800 m) or Pungyen Gompa	3,530 m
DAY 8	Samagaun → Samdo ~3 hrs easy walk · good afternoon for rest	3,860 m
DAY 9	Samdo → Dharamsala ~4 hrs · cross into Larkya La catchment	4,460 m
DAY 10	Dharamsala → Larke Pass → Bimthang Start 4–5 AM · ~9 hrs · descent is long post-pass	5,106 m
DAY 11	Bimthang → Dharapani → Kathmandu ~4 hrs descent then jeep or bus	1,860 m

14-Day Standard Manaslu Circuit Trek Itinerary

The 14-day itinerary is the most popular format we run and the one we recommend to most trekkers with moderate Himalayan experience. It starts the trek from Soti Khola rather than Machha Khola, giving an extra day of lower-altitude walking that helps legs and lungs prepare. The acclimatization day at Samagaun is non-negotiable at this pace, and many groups add a short hike toward Samdo on Day 9 before returning to sleep, reinforcing the altitude gain.

14-Day Manaslu Trek Itinerary

Most Popular · Balanced Pacing

DAY 1

Kathmandu → Arughat → Soti Khola

	Drive ~7 hrs, short walk to lodge	930 m
DAY 2	Soti Khola → Machha Khola ~5–6 hrs · river valley, good warm-up day	900 m
DAY 3	Machha Khola → Jagat ~5 hrs · checkpoint entry, permit checked here	1,340 m
DAY 4	Jagat → Deng ~5–6 hrs · river gorge, multiple bridge crossings	1,804 m
DAY 5	Deng → Ghap ~4–5 hrs · steep sections, pine and rhododendron	2,160 m
DAY 6	Ghap → Namrung ~5–6 hrs · traditional stone villages	2,630 m
DAY 7	Namrung → Lho → Shyala ~5 hrs · Lho Gompa, wide valley opens up	3,500 m
DAY 8	Shyala → Samagaun ~3–4 hrs · gentle walk, arrive early	3,530 m
DAY 9	Samagaun — Acclimatization Day Manaslu Base Camp hike (4,800 m) or Pungyen Gompa (4,050 m)	3,530 m
DAY 10	Samagaun → Samdo ~3 hrs · cross Budhi Gandaki headwaters	3,860 m
DAY 11	Samdo → Dharamsala ~4 hrs · last settlement before pass	4,460 m
DAY 12	Dharamsala → Larke Pass (5,106 m) → Bimthang 4:00 AM start recommended · ~8–10 hrs total	5,106 m
DAY 13	Bimthang → Tilje → Dharapani ~5–6 hrs descent · legs feel it after the pass	1,860 m
DAY 14	Dharapani → Kathmandu Jeep or bus via Besisahar · ~7–8 hrs	1,400 m

16-Day Classic Manaslu Circuit Trek Itinerary

The 16-day version is what we consider the best all-round itinerary for most trekkers — it has enough flexibility to handle a rest day at Namrung if anyone feels under the weather, a proper acclimatization day at Samagaun, an optional acclimatization push from Samdo, and time to visit Lho Gumpa without rushing. Groups who have done Everest Base Camp or similar will find this pace comfortable.

16-Day Classic Manaslu Circuit		Best All-Round · Comfortable Pace
DAY 1	Kathmandu → Soti Khola Drive via Arughat Bazar	930 m
DAY 2	Soti Khola → Machha Khola ~5 hrs warm-up walk along Budhi Gandaki	900 m
DAY 3	Machha Khola → Jagat ~5–6 hrs · permit checkpoint · MCAP & ACAP checked	1,340 m
DAY 4	Jagat → Deng ~5–6 hrs · narrow gorge, trail can be slippery after rain	1,804 m
DAY 5	Deng → Ghap ~4–5 hrs · Tsum Valley junction at Lokpa nearby	2,160 m
DAY 6	Ghap → Namrung ~5–6 hrs · village life becomes more Tibetan in character	2,630 m
DAY 7	Namrung — Rest or Explore Visit Namrung Gumpa, short hike above village · good buffer day	2,630 m
DAY 8	Namrung → Lho ~3 hrs · Lho Gumpa is worth a full morning visit	3,180 m
DAY 9	Lho → Samagaun via Shyala ~4–5 hrs · Manaslu north face becomes prominent	3,530 m
DAY 10	Samagaun — Acclimatization Manaslu Base Camp hike (4,800 m) highly recommended	3,530 m
DAY 11	Samagaun → Samdo	3,860 m

	~3 hrs · Tibetan yak herders, open plateau feel	
DAY 12	Samdo — Explore Hike toward Tibetan border viewpoint (~4,200 m) · return to sleep	3,860 m
DAY 13	Samdo → Dharamsala ~4 hrs · moraine terrain, cold nights guaranteed	4,460 m
DAY 14	Dharamsala → Larke Pass → Bimthang 4:00 AM start · ~9–10 hrs · snow possible year-round	5,106 m
DAY 15	Bimthang → Dharapani ~5–6 hrs descent through rhododendron and oak forest	1,860 m
DAY 16	Dharapani → Kathmandu Jeep to Besisahar, then bus or private vehicle	1,400 m

17-Day Manaslu Circuit with Proper Acclimatization

If you have never been above 4,000 metres before, or if you are travelling in a group with mixed fitness levels, 17 days is what we recommend. The key difference from 16 days is a second acclimatization point — either an extra night at Namrung or a deliberate short-day split between Samdo and Dharamsala, sleeping at an intermediate camp near 4,200 m before continuing to Dharamsala. This version also allows a more relaxed morning on pass day, starting at 4:30–5:00 AM instead of 4:00 AM.

17-Day Highlights vs 16-Day

Extra Buffer	Additional rest day at Namrung (Day 7) to allow lower altitude adjustment
Split Stage	Samdo to intermediate camp (4,200 m), then to Dharamsala
Pass Day	More relaxed start — 4:30–5:00 AM instead of 4:00 AM
Best For	First-time high-altitude trekkers, older adults, mixed-fitness groups

18-Day Extended Manaslu Circuit Trek Itinerary

The 18-day version is ideal for trekkers who want time to explore side valleys and monastery sites without the feeling of always catching up with the schedule. We typically use the extra days to add Serang Gompa (described in its own section below) or to spend proper time at Lho exploring the entire monastery complex. Some groups use an 18-day framework to combine a shortened Tsum Valley entry (as far as Chumling) before rejoining the main circuit.

The overall trail structure remains the same as the 16-day version, with additional flexibility built in around Namrung, Samagaun, and the post-pass section.

Manaslu Circuit with Serang Gompa Side Trip

Serang Gompa is a high-altitude monastery located above the main circuit, accessible via a trail that branches off near Bihi (between Deng and Ghap) or from Prok village. Most trekkers on the standard circuit never make this detour, which is precisely what makes it worth doing. The monastery sits at around 3,850 metres in a location that feels genuinely remote — you may well be the only group there for several days.

The trail from Prok to Serang Gompa and back adds approximately 2–3 days to your itinerary. The path is steep and not well-maintained in all sections. As of our last group through in late October 2024, one of our guides confirmed that the trail above 3,200 metres had some fallen sections from the monsoon that required careful footing. This is not a detour to add lightly, but for trekkers interested in Tibetan Buddhist culture and remote landscapes, it is one of the genuine highlights of the entire Manaslu region.

Serang Gompa Extension Details

Access Point	Prok village (off the main circuit near Ghap–Namrung section)
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Altitude	Serang Gompa approx. 3,850 m
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Extra Days	2–3 days added to the base itinerary
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Tea Houses	Basic lodging available at Prok; camping may be needed near the gompa
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Best Base	Use 16-Day or 17-Day main circuit as foundation
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Trail Condition	Steep and remote; good trekking fitness required
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Manaslu Circuit with Tsum Valley – 18 & 22 Day Itineraries

Tsum Valley is a separate restricted area that branches off the main Manaslu Circuit trail. The entry point is at Lokpa, accessible from Philim or from a junction near Deng. Tsum Valley was opened to trekkers later than the Manaslu Circuit — it requires its own separate restricted area permit on top of the MCAP (Manaslu Conservation Area Permit) — and it has seen far less tourist infrastructure development as a result. This is its main draw: the Tumba people maintain a distinct Tibetan Buddhist culture that has changed relatively little.

The key villages in Tsum Valley are Chumling, Chhokangparo, Nile, and Mu Gompa. Mu Gompa, at 3,700 metres, is the highest and most sacred monastery in the valley and the goal of most trekkers who enter Tsum. The round trip from the Lokpa junction to Mu Gompa and back takes approximately 5–7 days depending on pace.

18-Day Tsum Valley + Manaslu Circuit Itinerary

18-Day Tsum Valley + Manaslu Circuit		Cultural Depth · Two Restricted Areas
DAY 1	Kathmandu → Soti Khola Drive via Arughat	930 m
DAY 2	Soti Khola → Machha Khola ~5 hrs · warm-up along Budhi Gandaki	900 m
DAY 3	Machha Khola → Lokpa (Tsum Junction) ~5–6 hrs · Tsum Valley restricted area entry point	1,100 m
DAY 4	Lokpa → Chumling ~5 hrs into Tsum Valley · stone villages, yak dzo	2,386 m
DAY 5	Chumling → Chhokangparo ~5–6 hrs · mani walls and chortens throughout	3,031 m
DAY 6	Chhokangparo → Nile ~4–5 hrs · high pastures, prayer flags at every pass	3,361 m
DAY 7	Nile → Mu Gompa	3,700 m

	~4 hrs · valley head, important monastery complex	
DAY 8	Mu Gompa — Explore Visit monasteries and Ripchet lake · cultural immersion day	3,700 m
DAY 9	Mu Gompa → Chhokangparo ~5 hrs return descent	3,031 m
DAY 10	Chhokangparo → Philim / Rejoin Main Circuit ~5–6 hrs via Tsum exit · rejoin Manaslu main trail	1,590 m
DAY 11	Philim → Deng ~4–5 hrs · back on the Budhi Gandaki main trail	1,804 m
DAY 12	Deng → Namrung via Ghap ~7 hrs or split over two days if needed	2,630 m
DAY 13	Namrung → Samagaun via Lho ~6 hrs · familiar Manaslu views unfold	3,530 m
DAY 14	Samagaun — Acclimatization Base Camp hike (4,800 m) or rest	3,530 m
DAY 15	Samagaun → Samdo → Dharamsala ~7 hrs combined · possible to split if fit	4,460 m
DAY 16	Dharamsala → Larke Pass → Bimthang 4:00–4:30 AM start · summit day	5,106 m
DAY 17	Bimthang → Dharapani ~5–6 hrs descent	1,860 m
DAY 18	Dharapani → Kathmandu Jeep / bus return	1,400 m

22-Day Full Tsum Valley + Manaslu Exploration

The 22-day itinerary is for trekkers who want to spend proper time in Tsum Valley — not just pass through it. The extra days allow a rest at Mu Gompa, exploration of the side valley toward Ganesh Himal viewpoints, a slower return through Tsum, and a complete Manaslu Circuit with full acclimatization stops at Namrung, Samagaun, and Samdo. This is our flagship itinerary for groups combining cultural interest with high-altitude trekking.

22-Day Itinerary Structure

Days 1–2	Kathmandu to trailhead (Soti Khola or Machha Khola)
Days 3–4	Lower Budhi Gandaki to Lokpa (Tsum entry)
Days 5–11	Full Tsum Valley loop: Chumling → Chhokangparo → Nile → Mu Gompa (2 nights) → return via alternate trail
Days 12–13	Rejoin main circuit at Philim, walk to Deng and Ghap
Days 14–16	Ghap → Namrung (rest) → Lho → Samagaun
Day 17	Samagaun acclimatization (Base Camp hike)
Days 18–19	Samagaun → Samdo (acclimatization hike) → Dharamsala
Day 20	Larke Pass crossing → Bimthang
Day 21	Bimthang → Dharapani
Day 22	Drive to Kathmandu

Important note on Tsum Valley logistics: Tsum Valley has only a handful of proper tea houses compared to the main Manaslu Circuit. The lodges in Chhokangparo and Nile are basic — expect shared rooms, limited menu, and sometimes no electricity. Sleeping bags are essential. The Tsum Valley permit is USD 40 per week, in addition to the Manaslu Conservation Area Permit. Both must be arranged in Kathmandu before departure.

Manaslu Circuit Itinerary Comparison — Which One Is Right for You?

Here is a direct comparison of the main itinerary options, with guidance on who each is best suited for. The decision usually comes down to three things: available time, previous altitude experience, and whether you want to include Tsum Valley.

Duration	Start Point	Acclimatization Stops	Best For	Recommended?
10 Days	Machha Khola	Samagaun only	Very fit, altitude-experienced	Caution advised
11 Days	Machha Khola	Samagaun only	Fit trekkers, some altitude exp.	Minimum viable
14 Days	Soti Khola	Samagaun	Most trekkers with moderate fitness	Yes — Popular
16 Days	Soti Khola	Namrung + Samagaun + Samdo	Any trekker, including beginners	Yes — Best Value
17 Days	Soti Khola	Multiple, including intermediate	First-time high altitude, older adults	Yes — Safest Option
18 Days	Soti Khola	Full acclimatization + Serang	Explorers wanting side trips	Yes — Extended
18 Days (Tsum)	Machha Khola	Mu Gompa + Samagaun	Cultural trekkers, limited time	Yes — Cultural
22 Days (Tsum)	Soti Khola	Full stops + 2 nights Mu Gompa	Full exploration, no time pressure	Yes — Best Overall

Acclimatization Strategy on the Manaslu Circuit

Larke Pass at 5,106 metres is the critical point of the entire trek. Everything in the itinerary design exists to prepare you for that one day. Most altitude sickness problems we have dealt with over the years have come from trekkers who arrived at Samagaun (3,530 m) having skipped a rest day somewhere below, or who pushed directly to Dharamsala without sleeping at Samdo first.

The standard rule in this region is: **sleep no higher than 300–400 metres above where you slept the night before**, except on day sections where you ascend and descend back to the same camp. The trek from Lho (3,180 m) to Samagaun (3,530 m) is fine in a single day. The climb from Samagaun to Dharamsala (4,460 m) should be done over two days, with a night at Samdo (3,860 m) in between.

Signs that require immediate descent: Loss of coordination, inability to walk in a straight line, severe headache that does not respond to paracetamol or ibuprofen, confusion, and any signs of fluid in the lungs (gurgling sound when breathing). Do not wait to see if these improve overnight at altitude. Descend immediately.

On the Manaslu circuit, evacuation from above Samagaun is difficult. Helicopter rescue is possible with adequate travel insurance, but weather windows can close for days at a time, particularly in post-monsoon October. Prevention through proper acclimatization is far more reliable than rescue planning.

The Larke Pass Day in Detail

Most lodges at Dharamsala serve breakfast from 3:30 AM on the understanding that groups leave by 4:00–4:30 AM. The pass summit is roughly 4–5 hours from Dharamsala. The descent from the pass to Bimthang is another 4–5 hours and is the part that surprises people — the legs are already tired from the ascent, and the technical terrain on the western descent requires concentration.

Snow on the pass is possible throughout the year, but it is most significant in early spring (March) and after heavy snowfall events in late November. Crampons and ice axes are generally not required for spring and autumn trekkers, but micro-spikes are useful insurance. Check with your guide the evening before about current conditions.

Manaslu Trek Permits and Cost Overview

Manaslu is a restricted trekking area. You cannot enter independently — you must be accompanied by a licensed guide from a registered Nepali trekking company. This applies to all foreign nationals regardless of nationality. The permit system is managed by the Nepal Tourism Board and checked at multiple points along the route, starting at Jagat.

MCAP

NPR 3,000

ACAP

NPR 3,000

RESTRICTED AREA PERMIT

USD 100

Manaslu Conservation Area
Permit — required for all trekkers entering the circuit

Annapurna Conservation Area
Permit — required for the Bimthang–Dharapani exit section

Per person per week (Sep–Nov).
USD 75 per person per week (Dec–Aug). Mandatory.

TSUM VALLEY PERMIT

USD 40/week

Additional restricted area permit for Tsum Valley. Separate from Manaslu RAP.

The restricted area permit pricing changes by season. September, October, and November are the peak season rates (USD 100 per week). The rest of the year is USD 75 per week. If your trek spans two calendar weeks — which is common on 14-day and longer itineraries — you pay for two weeks. Budget accordingly when comparing costs between agencies.

Practical Advice: Tea Houses, Gear, and Road Access

Tea House Development on the Circuit

The teahouse situation on the Manaslu Circuit improved significantly after 2010, when the trail became more popular following restrictions on the Annapurna and Everest circuits during certain political periods. Before 2010, you could expect very basic accommodation, thin walls, shared outdoor toilets, and menus limited to dal bhat and noodle soup. That is still the reality in some sections, but the villages from Namrung upward now have proper lodges with enclosed dining rooms, attached bathrooms in the better rooms, and menus that include pasta, eggs, porridge, and seasonal vegetables.

Samagaun has the best selection of lodges on the upper circuit, with around six to eight tea houses of varying quality. Samdo has three to four. Dharamsala has two lodges, both basic — the walls are thin and it gets seriously cold at night. Bring a quality sleeping bag rated to at least -15°C for the Dharamsala stay, regardless of what season you are trekking in.

Current Road Access and Starting Points

Road construction has been advancing slowly up the Budhi Gandaki valley for the past decade. As of our last operational season, jeep access is reliable to Machha Khola and in some conditions to Jagat,

depending on recent road maintenance and rainfall. We still recommend starting the actual trek from Soti Khola or Machha Khola rather than driving further, even when the road allows it — the walking from Machha Khola to Jagat is some of the most beautiful lowland river gorge terrain on the entire route and is worth not skipping.

The drive from Kathmandu to Machha Khola takes 7–9 hours in a jeep, longer by public bus. We use private jeeps for all our groups. The road after Arughat Bazar is unpaved and rough, with sections that can be impassable after heavy rain during the pre-monsoon period in May and during the monsoon itself.

Essential Gear for the Manaslu Circuit

The gear list for Manaslu is similar to other 5,000-metre treks in Nepal, with a few adjustments. Down jacket and thermal layers are mandatory — even in October, temperatures at Dharamsala and on the pass can drop to -10°C or colder before sunrise. Trekking poles are strongly recommended, especially for the descent from Larke Pass where the trail is steep and loose in places. Waterproof boots are worth the extra weight — the lower sections of the trail, especially in the gorge below Jagat, can be muddy for hours at a time after rain.

From our guides' experience: The single gear item that causes the most problems is footwear. Trekkers who arrive with trail runners or light hikers often find the descent from Larke Pass hard on the feet — the trail is rocky and steep for several hours after the top. Ankle support matters on this route more than on flatter circuits.

How to Choose the Right Manaslu Circuit Itinerary

Choose 10–11 Days If...

You have significant previous experience at altitude (above 4,500 m), are physically fit with recent trekking experience, have a hard time constraint, and understand that you are compressing the acclimatization window. This is not a beginner itinerary. We do run it on request, but we make the risks clear.

Choose 14 Days If...

You have moderate trekking experience, have been above 3,500 m before without problems, and have two weeks available. This is the most popular commercial itinerary for a reason — it covers the whole circuit with one solid acclimatization day and reasonable daily distances.

Choose 16–17 Days If...

You are new to high-altitude trekking, are over 50, have any pre-existing cardiovascular or respiratory conditions, or are leading a group with mixed fitness levels. The extra days are not wasted — the time at Namrung and the optional Samdo day hike do real physiological work in preparing your body for Larke Pass.

Choose 18–22 Days (Tsum Valley) If...

You want more than a trekking circuit — you want to understand the culture, visit the gompas properly, spend time with local communities, and come home with a sense of having been somewhere genuinely different from the standard Nepal trekking circuit. Tsum Valley is one of the most culturally intact places accessible to trekkers in the Himalaya. It deserves more than a rushed transit.

Manaslu Trek Itinerary Difficulty Overview



Choosing Your Manaslu Circuit Itinerary

The Manaslu Circuit is not a trek you want to rush, and it is not one you want to under-prepare for. The altitude is real, the remoteness is real, and the trail demands respect. But with the right itinerary and a competent guide, it is one of the most complete trekking experiences available in Nepal — combining high-altitude passes, river gorge wilderness, Tibetan Buddhist culture, and mountain views that you will not find crowded with other trekkers.

Our recommendation: if you have 14 days, do the 14-day circuit. If you can stretch to 16 or 17 days, take that option — the extra time is spent on the mountain, not in a city. If you have 18 or more days and any interest in cultural trekking, include at least a partial Tsum Valley route.

We have been running groups through the Manaslu region for over two decades. Every season the trail teaches us something new — a lodge that has improved, a trail section that has changed after monsoon, a village that has grown. The best way to plan your Manaslu circuit trek itinerary is to talk to someone who was there last season. **Contact Manaslu Treks and Expedition** for a current itinerary recommendation based on your fitness, available dates, and what you most want to get from the experience.

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All itinerary details based on current field experience and subject to seasonal and trail condition changes.