

Trek **in** **Nepal**

I. Lower or Cultural GHT (Easternmost Section)

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Lower GHT



Mustard Greens *Brassica juncea* are a seasonal staple in Nepal; where the whole plant is eaten.



A typical Nepali homestead in the Hill Region or *Pahad* zone, which lies between the flat *Terai* zone and the mountains of the *Himalaya* zone. The Lower GHT goes across the *Pahad*



The small valuable terrace fields are used for a variety of crops, here potatoes, through the year.

This is a summary easternmost quarter of the Lower Great Himalaya Trail which goes across Nepal from the east to the west. The total Lower GHT is around 1500 km, of which 387 is here. There is much ascent and descent but nearly the entire Lower GHT is on good paths and some on tractor tracks. In general this quarter of the entire route takes about a month to complete.

The optimum time of year to do the trek is in the autumn through to the spring. It is best to avoid the trek during the monsoon months from late June to mid September. The autumn months will be greener, with crystal clear views, while in the spring the fields are brown and the sky hazy. As you are seldom going above 3000 metres it is not that cold and night frosts are infrequent - even high up.

Accommodation is a mixture. The few towns have poor quality hotels and the villages have very rustic lodges which cater more for local

porters rather than rare tourists. Occasionally there are no hotels or lodges and one must camp or be invited into a family home for board and lodging. In the family home one is expected to pay - and large tip should also be given as they are very cheap.

Food is pretty much available at the lodges and homestays. While it is simple and healthy, the variety is small with just *Dahl Bhat* (rice and lentils) or noodles on offer. The water should be treated as a rule and is available from standpipes in most villages and hamlets.

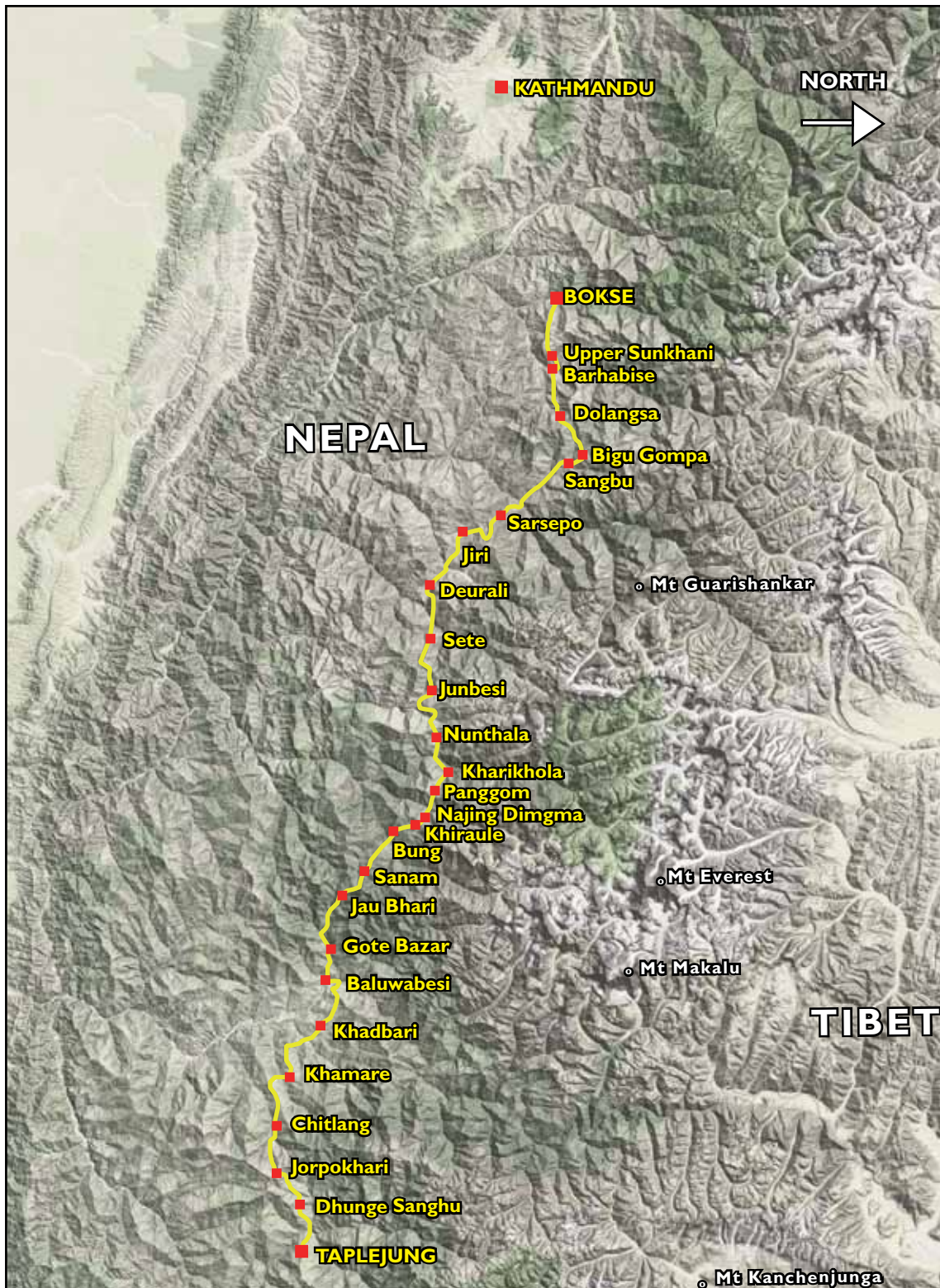
There are no permits needed for this easternmost section and just the occasional National Park fee to pay. It is easy to do alone but a Nepali porter/guide helps with route finding, enabled you to mix socially along the route, and will arrange homestays and lodges. These benefits easily outweigh the wages and meals you provide for him, especially if you cannot speak any Nepali - as English is seldom.



Day 1. The route starts with a long descent from Taplejung down into the deep Tamor valley which drains the Himalaya ranges to the north, including the Kanchenjunga Massif. The 3 hour descent goes past hamlets of agricultural homesteads amongst the extensive small terraced fields to the bridge at Dobhan.



Day 2. The homestead is the centre of rural Nepali life. It is the heart of the family and one will frequently find 3 generations living in each. On the lowest floor there is often the kitchen and storage rooms, one of which chickens might be locked in nightly. On the first floor is the main accommodation with many simple bedrooms and the traditional balcony. In the attic is further storage of foods and grains.



Map of the Lower GHT route from Taplejung in the very east of Nepal to Bokse at the eastern edge of the popular Helambu area. The route goes through the southern foothills of the Himalayas in the shadow of the 8000m mountains of Kanchenjunga, Makalu and Everest on the Tibetan border. To view the page in the correct alignment rotate 90 degrees anticlockwise in Adobe Acrobat



Day 5. Most homesteads have a barn for the goats, occasional cattle or buffalo, and also for agricultural implements and farm tools. The simpler ones still have bamboo and grass roofs while the less-poor ones upgrade to corrugated iron. The homesteads are usually surrounded by their small terraced fields.



Day 7. The average Nepali farmer in the Hill Region, or *Pahad*, are still very poor. The steep landscape means only unmechanized subsistence farming is possible on the the narrow terraced field which contour the hillside. These fields must be ploughed with oxen and wooden ploughs and then hand tilled. Fields are used intensively so when one crop is harveted another type is planted, so each have 2 a year.



Day 1. The busy town of Taplejung (pop. 5000) is the start of the Lower GHT. It is reached by small plane or is a long day's drive from Birtamod town on the *Terai*. Taplejung is sited at 1800m on a spur overlooking the deep Tamor Nadi river valley.



Day 1. After the descent from Taplejung to Dobhan, there is a climb to the hamlet of Dhunge Saghu. There is no accommodation here except for a hospitable and simple family house, so it is best to continue to Tembe where there's a rustic lodge.



Day 2. From Dhunge Saghu there is a long steep 1800m climb past the villages of Tembe and Sangu, then through jungle to Jorpokhari pass, 2905m, where there are simple lodges for local muleteers.



Day 4. After the small traditional town of Chainpur there is another long descent past simple homesteads and then through forest to the Hewa Khola river valley



Day 4. Wood is the main source of cooking fuel for the rural population and it is harvested from the community forests. Woodcutting is monitored by the village elders to prevent over felling.



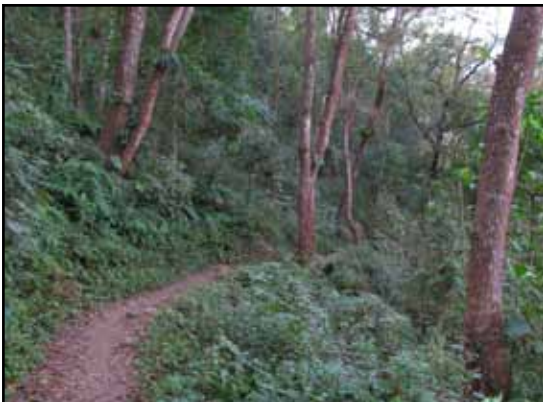
Day 4. The simple lodge at Khamare provides rustic shelter and the staple food of Dhal Bhat. Most simple lodges are family run with very basic facilities and limited provisions, but very friendly.



Day 7. Climbing up the ridge above Baluwabesi and looking north up the Arun River valley which drains the snowy Himalaya to the north, seen through the trees. It is in this massif where Makalu, 8468m, rises on the Nepal/Tibet border.



Day 7. Re-thatching a homestead barn in the hamlet of Chalise. The grass used for the thatching is the rice straw from the paddy fields after the harvest. In areas too high for rice to grow other grasses are used.



Day 7. After the ridge top hamlet Chalise the path descends past extensive paddy terraces and then into warm jungle as it drops down to the tumbling Irkhuwa Khola river



Day 7. Gote Bazar is a days walk from Baluwabesi and lies on banks of the now smaller Irkhuwa Khola. It is a collection of 20 houses with a couple of rustic porter lodges, of which this is one.



Day 8. There is a lot of cardemom grown here as a cash crop to help the farmers meagre incomes. The pods grow on shoots from the ground under the leaves and are harvested in Oct-Nov..



Day 9. The route to Salpa Bhangjang (Salpa Pass), 3360m, goes up a ridge for almost 2000m from Phedi at 1500m before it reaches the pass. En route you go from Jungle to Montane forest.



Day 7. The other lodge at Gote Bazar. Both lodges here provide food and shelter to porters who go up and down the valley carrying goods and building materials on their backs. The lodges serve Dhal Bhat (rice and lentil curry) and other simple food and wooden platforms in open rooms to sleep on.



Day 9. Looking across the valley to a 3400m mountain from the climb up to the Salpa Pass. The steep forests provide timber and firewood. There is little hunting in these forests as there is sparse game and at these altitudes many people are Buddhists. Rarely Red Panda's can be seen here, as this is their habitat.



Day 10. The hamlet of Sanam, with its few lodges is a ethnically Sherpa enclave in an otherwise largely Rai area. The Rai occupy the lower lands and are subsistence farmers, while the Sherpas occupy the higher land above 2000m and are largely pastoralists and traders. Like most Nepali groups they thrive together.



Day 11. A typical homestead in the Rai village of Bung. The house is surrounded by terraced rice and maize fields. It is 2 stories high with the kitchen/storage and small animals on the lower floor and accomodation on the first floor. The pit toilet is a separate shed nearby. The maize is stored in stacks by each homestead in a unique frame construction found across this region



Day 8. Porters transport goods in roadless areas. Porters charge per kilo per day so will carry more than comfortable loads. They should be 15 years but here is a 12-year-old with his 35 kilos!



Day 8. Building timber is still cut by hand. Here a long saw is operated by two cutters. The "top dog" has to pull the 3 kg saw up but the "underdog" gets covered in sawdust.



Day 9. The damper cloud forests between 1700 and 1800 are usually composed of tall Holly Oak over rhododendron. Above are pines and firs and below is jungle or cultivated land.



Day 10. Looking back to the Salpa Pass from the path to the Rai village of Gudel showing the Holly Oak forests which are filled with birdsong. The trees are often hand coppiced for goat fodder.



Day 11. Dried leaves are collected from the forest to form bedding for smaller animals throughout Nepal. When the leaves are changed the manure is carried to the small terraced field in baskets.



Day 11. The terraced fields are at the heart of subsistence agriculture in the *Pahad* region of Nepal. The manure and leaves are carried to each field and dug in by hand to maintain the fertility.



Day 11. Prayer wheels are common in Buddhist areas and each time the wheel revolves it ushers a prayer. They are either small or large like this one at Chambhaling gompa which stands 3 metre high



Day 12. On the path from Khiraule to Surke La Pass, 3000m you pass from Hindu Rai to the Buddhist Sherpa areas with it's chortens. In the distance is Salpa Pass, crossed 3 days previously.



Day 12. Bee keeping and honey harvesting are found throughtout Nepal. Here are hives made out of hollow logs which will then be taken and placed in the forest or on rock faces.



Day 12. Najing Dingma is a Sherpa hamlet sited on a plateau west of Surke La Pass. It is becoming more comfortable as there is a new gompa and trekking lodge to replace the rustic lodge here.



Day 20. The homesteads near Jiri were much bigger with a full second floor. The roof of many of these were covered in huge slabs of slate. The balconies here were adorned with flower pots.



Day 20. Goats cannot be trusted to wander freely where there are so many crops around and they are kept tethered around the homestead. So fodder, often Holly Oak leaves, must be collected.



Day 14. On the descent from Panggom to Karikhola you descend down the side valley here into the main Dudh Kosi Valley ahead which drains the entire Everest region. On the otherside of the Dudh Kosi valley rises Numbur, 6959m, which is a relatively small peak compared to others up to the right up the main valley below.



Day 17. Leaving the relatively affluent and comfortable village of Jumbesi below en route to climb over the higher Lamjura Pass at 3530m. Beyond the village of Jumbesi the valley rises north up to the same Numbur mountain which was seen a few days earlier from Panggom



Day 20. If there is no lodge a householder often offers a guest (pahuna) a stay, like here at Sarsepo. You eat, laugh and sleep in the family house for a small cost-which must not be exploited!



Day 23. Looking east through the trees from the Tinsang La pass, 3280m, back towards Bigu Gompa and Gaurishankar, 7135m, in the left of the picture towering above all in the area.



Day 23. Looking south down the escarpment from Tinsang La pass towards Kalinchowk mountain, where there is an important Hindu and Shamanist temple



Day 25. Upper Sunkhani above Barhabise has no lodges and one must camp or rely on a homestay before crossing the jungle clad ridge over to Dhuskot and Bokse the next day.



Day 26. Churning cream with revolving paddles on a shaft to eventually emulsify the cream into butter. This is being done at the homestay by the household head in the morning at Upper Sunkhani



Day 26. The steep escarpment after Gudai village. From here the path goes across the face to the right to gain the ridge and then drops over the other side to Dhuskot and eventually Bokse



Day 18. The tree-like red *Rhododendron arboreum* (Nepali; Lali gurans) is the national flower of Nepal and flowers in Feb-April



Day 18. The Lower Pahad is also the orange belt and even in the late winter there are small groves with abundant fruit growing like the one here at Kinja. After this the trees come into blossom again to begin anew.



Day 12. *Daphne bholua* smells wonderful and is in full blossom in the early spring from 1500 to 2500 metres.



Day 26. The charming hamlet of Upper Sunkhani lies high above the town of Barhabise in the Sun Kosi valley down to the right. To the left is the edge of the thick jungle between here and the village of Gudai further west. In the distance are the mountains of the Jugal and Langtang Himalaya on the Tibet border.

NEPAL: Lower or Cultural GHT (east section)

Day	Start	Finish	Km	Up	Down	Time	General
1	Taplejung	Dhunge Sanghu	16km	590	1320	9	Leave Taplejung on the road south to Phedim for a km to the arch. Here a track and path descend the crest of the ridge for 3-4 hours through simple homesteads and hamlets. The path is easy to lose as it alternates between tractor track and footpath. However all paths lead down to the mighty Tamur Nadi river 1100 m below. Cross the footbridge at Dobhan to find simple cafes in this large hamlet. Now cross another bridge and begin a relentless climb for 3 hours climbing past hamlets until the path eases. It is now "Nepali flat" for an hour to the hamlet of Dhunge Sanghu among paddy terraces. 15 minutes after the two massive trees by the school and at the end of the long hamlet are unsigned and very simple lodgings which you have to be directed to if you run out of daylight (as I did) to reach Tembe, nearly an hour further.
2	Dhunge Sanghu	Jorpokhari	15km	1700	150	9	Leave the stretched hamlet and cross a bridge over a brook then contour the hillside for a hour to reach the cluster of 20 houses, simple shop and rustic lodgings at Tembe sitting on a spur. From here there is a easy climb up into the valley for an hour to cross a larger stream in the jungle. Another hour's steep climb will take you to the village of Sangu with 30 houses, school and a few simple shops. Prepare here and maybe hire a porter (as I did) for the 1500m climb to Jorpokhari on the ridge high above. The relentless trail climbs steeply for 5 hours criss-crossing a bulldozed dirt road. Passing damp forest and high grassland the muddy path enters rhododendron forest at 2700m. At the pass is a cluster of 5 rustic shacks offering simple food and lodging to muleteers, but you will be too tired to care. Due to the road it is perhaps better to consider the route from Dobhan to Gorja, on the first night, and then to nearby Gupha on this second night, both offer less rustic accommodation.
3	Jorpokhari	Chitlang	13km	130	1730	7	From Jorpokhari, with its splendid unbroken views of the enormous Kanchenjunga Range, head west down into the valley. The path heads down into a grassy bowl and the keeps to the north side of the valley once the stream draining the bowl forms. After a good 2 hours it contours along the north side of the valley flank until the wooded ridge comes to meet it. The second half of the descent to Nundhaki is unremitting as you follow the crest steeply down passing hamlets of simple homesteads until at last in the midst of the bamboo zone you reach Nundhaki and simple food and shops at this roadhead. Ignoring the dirt road continue down the ridge's crest bearing north to reach the valley floor and river after half an hour. Cross two footbridges above where the dirt road fords the rivers and then join the road. Gently ascend for almost an hour up the empty track above paddy terraces to reach the small friendly hamlet of Chitlang on a ridge spur, where there are rustic lodgings.
4	Chitlang	Khamare	19km	560	1090	9.5	Leave the small, happy, hamlet of Chitlang and walk along the empty dusty track. Level walking is a rare luxury in Nepal and today there is much of it. The track traverses the hillside for two hours to reach crest the ridge as it descends west at the unpleasant, frontier, bustling village of Pokhari. From here the track, now with the occasional tractor and motorbike, continues along the crest for a good hour to descend into the lovely town of Chainpur with old houses and a busy main street of shops. At the west end of Chainpur the route drops diagonally down the hillside, passing quaint homesteads to gain a ridge descending steeply for 700 metres to the Hewa Khola river in the hot jungle of the valley floor. Cross the swing bridge and start a 300m climb through paddy's, bananas and occasional homesteads by enormous fig trees, to reach the simple hamlet of Khamare sited on another track. Here the 5 mud, bamboo and corrugated shacks offer the most rustic accommodation yet.
5	Khamare	Khadbari	15km	860	630	8	Leave the shacks and head west up the track slowly gaining height to reach the ridge and the village of Lingling. Here the track forks with the used branch dropping west to Tumlingtar and a leafy track heads north west down into the valley between Lingling and the now visible Khadbari on the otherside. The long descent takes 2 hours through trackside hamlets of picturesque homesteads, before a path leads off steeply to the north to enter jungle. Descend through jungle on the path to spill out on the paddy terraces on the valley floor. Cross the stream and a jungle clad spur separating it from the bigger river just the north which is bridged a km above the confluence. Here each side of the bridge at about 400m are simple shack cafes to fuel up for the 600m climb. The wide busy path climbs for two hours, initially through jungle then homesteads, to reach the ridge top track. Turn north and follow the dusty track for 2 km to Khadbari. Around the Pokari Bazar square there are a few "I" star hotels, some even with functioning showers.
6	Khadbari	Baluwabesi	21km	550	1190	10	Leave Khadbari and head north up the track for a good hour passing a continuous row of small settlements to a larger village at Mane Bhanjyang. At the track's fork bear west and follow the new track as it traverses across a valley dipping slightly before reaching the small Chandanpur village. The road now drops through the lovely hamlets of Heluwa, then jungle, before reaching the paddy terraces on the Arun valley floor by Sunkani. Head north to cross the bridge (erroneously marked on map) and reach the other side south of Bumling. Now head south on a small trail west of the river across paddy terraces and through forest for a good hour when you reach the Inkhuwa Khola stream. Here the path splits take the lower which soon bridges the stream. Either head up to Chalise from here or continue south to the lovely village of Mudwabesi (as I did). Cross its paddy terraces and take the undulating jungle track for a further hour to reach Baluwabesi (also erroneously marked on the map) where there are simple lodgings, just upriver from Kittike footbridge over the Arun.

7	Baluwabesi	Gothe Bazar	11km	760	390	6	Head straight up the ridge from Baluwabesi climbing for a good 2 hours to gain 600m and the village of Mudwa, where there are great views over the unnecessarily circuitous route over the latter half of yesterday. Pass above charming hamlet of Chalise, high above the valley and then start a traversing descent across a bowl of paddy terraces. After the terraces the path continues to traverse down the side of the hill passing pretty homesteads and enters jungle. It drops all the way to the Inkhwa Khola in thick jungle. Follow the sandy riverbank up for a good km passing paddys to the new footbridge. Cross the bridge to the north side and continue upstream for a further half hour across more paddys amongst thick jungle to the hamlet of Gothe Bazar where a side stream enters the valley. Here there are very simple bamboo and mud lodges with grass roofs for the night.
8	Gothe Bazar	Jau Bhari	21km	1780	150	10.5	Leave Gothe Bazar and head upstream across paddys before crossing a small jungle spur to reach more paddys. After an hour cross the swing bridge to the south side and go through jungle for an hour to reach a major stream confluence with a bridge over each at Dobhane. Cross one branch, the Phedi Khola, here and gain the south side of the Inkhwa Khola again. The path now follows this big stream for 3 hours passing hamlets with paddys and cardamon terraces. The path passes the village of Bakhanma and then climbs more steeply to gain the village of Phedi, where there are simple shops and lodges. From Phedi the path now climbs relentlessly for 800 meters or 2½ hours up the steep stepped spine of the ridge, initially through forest, then hamlets and barley terraces to reach Jau Bhari lodge in a Buddhist enclave at 2300m altitude, just above a small gampa. The suggested route for the Lower GHT is completely wrong for this day.
9	Jau Bhari	Sanam	14km	1210	690	9.5	Continue up the ridge for another 200m until the hamlets give way to oak then rhododendron. The path climbs steeply through this damp montane forest busy until it traverses round the south of 2 knolls abreast the ridge, the second at 2900m. Here at the grassy saddle of Bilbate is a simple porters lodge. The route heads up more gently through juniper shrub until the rhododendrons and a spruce/fir tree dominate and after some 5 hours and 1000m you reach the chorten at the Salpa Bhanjang pass, 3300m. The path now drops down the NW side into a lush valley with huge fir/spruce and also oak trees all dripping in moss. It is said to be a red panda haunt. At the bottom in the main valley there are some homesteads with small scale timber operations in a forest clearing. From the clearing the path traverses up the forest on the valley side to reach the lovely Buddhist hamlet of Sanam, where there is nicer lodging.
10	Sanam	Lower Bung	16km	140	1480	6.5	Head west past the chorten, into the forest as you descend large holly oak dripping in moss. After an hour come to a second hamlet with a chorten and 10 odd houses before heading back into forest. There are great views across the deep wooded valley and the rhythmic thump of the woodcutters axe. As you descend further the forest thins and landscape dries. The path continues down the south side of the ridge until you are soon above hundreds of barley terraces surrounding a village. Continue round above them to reach a spur of the ridge. At it Gudel unfolds beneath you with its 200 homesteads and simple trekking lodge. Across the valley lies Bung village set amidst 1000's of terraces. Unfortunately there is a near 600m descent down a steep path across terraces and into the jungle clad ravine of the Hongu Khola river. Lower Bung is just a half hour climb from the swing bridge, and there is a simple trekking lodge here.
11	Lower Bung	Khiraule	9km	1080	10	4.5	Bung village is extensive and is spread out over the hillside. It ranges from the bridge over the Hongu Khola at about 1300m through middle and upper Bung at about 1800m. Homesteads and terraces are spread out each side of the rocky stepped path as it rises steadily. Initially the terraces are rice paddys but at the top they are small barley fields. At last the interesting path reaches the top of the village and bears north up through bamboo groves and fields for a good hour's climb until you pass from Hindu Bung to the small Buddhist village of Khiraule. Wander through this leafy hamlet for a km before beginning another climb after the small school. This leads you up past more barley terraces to Chambhaling gampa, set in a circular grove of trees, and beside which is a nice lodge.
12	Khiraule	Najing Dingma	8km	550	400	3.5	After looking round Chambhaling gampa head up to the prayer walls above to get the path to the large chorten with a great view back to the Salpa pass. The path now traverses up past meadows and pastoral shacks for a km before it enters the extensive rhododendron forest. It climbs gently up through these trees for an easy hour to reach a hamlet of 5 houses and some simple lodges. There is a path junction here with a branch continuing north to Mera Peak. We head west climbing for a further half hour to the Surke La pass at 3000m. The descent down the steep, bamboo clad west side takes an hour until you reach the grassy shelf at 2600m, on which the hamlet of Najing Dingma sits on high above the Inkhwa Khola valley. To the north-west are the around 6000m mountains east of Lukla. There is a friendly lodge here, as the next at Silbuje is a good 5 hours away easily visible across the deep valley.
13	Najing Dingma	Panggom	11km	1190	980	8	Head down into forest for a few hundred metres until the shacks of Gaikharka appear on their meagre barley terraces. Descend through this poor hamlet and continue down through jungle to the bridge at 1900m, over the ravine the Inkhwa Khola has cut. There is now a steep, hot and unremitting 600m climb to the lowest houses of Sibuje. The path eases somewhat but still climbs steeply up the ridge for 250m through the extended hamlet to the top of it where, there is the lodge. From here the path eases considerably as it climbs gently for a further 350m through rhododendron trees to reach Panggom La pass at about 3100m. There are views to the two passes of the previous 3 days and also to the popular Mera Peak, 6476m, clad in eternal snows. It is a quick 300m down the path to the affluent Sherpa hamlet of Panggom at 2850m in a grassy bowl under a larger gampa. Across the valley is the snowy, near-7000m Numbur peak.

14	Panggom	Kharikhola	8km	10	850	2	Leave Panggom and head across to the south side of the grassy bowl before starting your descent. Initially the path goes down under the pipe of the micro hydroscheme and then enters rhododendron woods. Descend keeping high above the forming Kharikhola stream. Soon leave the woods and descend through poorer homesteads among barley terraces. Across the valley are the hamlets of Bupse and Karte with their gompas and further down in the main valley runs the Dudh Kosi river which drains the entire Everest region. Soon catch glimpses of the rooftops of Kharikhola, mostly made of large slate slabs. Weave down through a confused network of braided paths between terraces to reach the main square and street in the centre of this larger village at 2000m, where there are a number of trekking style lodges on this once important route from the roadhead at Jiri to Everest. We now follow this route west to Jiri for 4-5 days.
15	Kharikhola	Nunthala	11km	790	580	5	Head west from the hub of Kharikhola and gently ascend west up to the gomba on the knoll. From here the path now descends through barley terraces to the village of Jubhing. Behind you are the snow covered peaks above Lukla. Continue down in to the valley towards the Dudh Kosi river passing mule trains coming up. Eventually at about 1500m you reach the long suspension bridge over this large river. Cross it and start the 700m climb up to Nunthala. Initially this is through pleasant, cool, shaded woods, but after a quick hour you emerge onto barley terraces again. Pass a couple of hamlets climbing steadily until the path steepens and goes round a ridge to arrive at the surprisingly organized village of Nunthala where there are about 10 lodges in the square at about 2200m altitude.
16	Nunthala	Junbesi	20km	1350	860	9	Leave the square in Nunthala and begin the long climb through barley terraces and homesteads to Taksindu. The busy path crosses into a wooded valley with a small stream crossed by swing bridge before the final climb up to Taksindu where there is a Buddhist monastery. From here there is a short climb to the Taksindu La pass at 3000m. After the pass the path drops down for half hour to Ringmu where there are a few lodges in the pines and a major path junction. Take the path to Jiri which descends into the conifer clad valley and then climbs through woods to Salung hamlet. From Salung the path contours round the ridge high above the larger farms of Beni far below. At Phurteng on the crest of the ridge at 3000m again, one can get a glimpse of Everest. The path now traverses down the otherside of the ridge losing 400m until you descend into the forested side valley wherein lies the village of Junbesi with 10 lodges.
17	Junbesi	Sete	18km	990	1090	7.5	From Junbesi the path starts to climb through scrubby country passing a few poorer hamlets until it reaches Taktor hamlet on the edge of the forest. The path now steepens as it climbs through magnificent spruce/fir forest with rhododendrons. It climbs for almost 2 hours until you reach the 3500m high Lamjura La pass, the highest so far. Instead of dropping down the otherside the path contours south across the steep hillside for 2 km until it reaches a ridge where there are a couple of windswept lodges. Only after these does the path begin its 2000m descent down the ridge. Firstly it drops through conifers on the spine of the ridge to the hamlet of Goyam and then continues down to a notch where there is a hamlet called Dakachu by two tiny ponds. Here the path veers south of the ridge and descends to Sete 1000 m down the ridge from the windswept lodges but still 1000m above the valley floor. There are a few lodges here at Sete.
18	Sete	Deurali	17km	1260	1070	9	Continue down for 1000m past homesteads and barley terraces until the knee jarring descent finally delivers you into the valley at the pretty village of Kinja at 2 streams confluence. Cross one stream and then the combined river to follow its north bank for about 2 km past orange groves on a track and then branch off up a path. Climb gently above the track and river past homesteads and then start a relentless hours climb to gain the southside of the sidevalley Bander lies in. Contour round the steep forested hillside for another hour to reach a huge grassy bowl which in lies the spreadout village of Bander with its lodges and small tea plantations. Ascend past the cluster of lodges until the grassy bowl steepens after an hour. The path now climbs steeply through forest crossing a series of hairpin bends on the track. It climbs for 2 hours to reach the pass by the hamlet of Deurali at 2700m. Here are 5 lodges and a roadhead for solid buses to connect to Jiri.
19	Deurali	Jiri	20km	690	1420	7.5	From the roadhead at Deurali pass head down into the rhododendron woods for a good hour on a cobbled path until you reach the upper barley terraces and a few small hamlets. The path continues to descend down the spine of the ridge with good views north to the 6000m peaks south of Rowaling Valley. The path crosses and re crosses the track as it descends with increasing steepness towards the larger village of Shivalaya on the valley floor. The path now heads west up the very scenic Yelung Khola valley full of pines, rhododendron and a clear stream. It climbs for a good 2 hours up this idyllic valley, leaving the pines and entering potato and barley terraces to the hamlet of Mali where old lodges are now forgotten, as all now take the bus to Shivalaya. From Mali there is a slight climb to the pass at 2350m before the easy descent on path and track to the town of Jiri, the district capital and original roadhead. It is a bustling place with many lodges.
20	Jiri	Sarsepo	16km	950	1010	7.5	From Jiri head up the track north of the town past grander homesteads and the gomba before starting to climb towards the tiny hamlet of Thokpa. Now the dusty track zig-zags steeply up the the col and the end of the near 800m hot climb. The reward is lush forest of large spruce/fir. Where the track divides take the right branch and soon after a footpath branches to the left and descends more steeply. Cross the track a couple of times as you descend steeply down the side of the valley to cross a swing bridge on the valley floor. Now contour round the north side of the valley for a good km to reach the hamlet of Sarakapti where there is a porters lodge. Contour round the hillside descending slightly on a lovely wooded track passing a few hamlets until it reaches Sauna. Here the path meets another tractor track which climbs slightly as it heads NW for 2 km to round a spur on which lies the hamlet of Sarsepo, where there is a friendly homestay.

21	Sarsepo	Sangba	26km	920	1160	9.5	Leave Sarsepo on the track and follow it NW as it contours along the ridge passing over the pretty hamlet of Jhyaku for an hour to reach the equally pretty Yarsa. There are now paths which drop steeply and mercilessly down the jungle clad spur of the ridge to Singati Bajar town. At last reach the valley floor where the large Tama Koshi is crossed by bridge. Walk through the hot, noisy, but small town and leave on the dusty track on the north side of the Singati Khola stream. The kilometres tick by quickly and after 2½ hours reach Salleni, and ½ hour later a dusty village at the confluence of two streams. Cross the bridge over the Sangati Khola and start up a ridge into pine forest on the spur of the ridge. After an hour the path veers to the east side of the ridge and levels off to reach the lovely village of Khorpa. Saunter through then contour across terraces and descend some forest to reach Sangba at the bridge over the Singati Khola again. There are scruffy porter lodges here or a better one 5 minutes further at Omanthali.
22	Sangba	Bigu Gompa	6km	890	10	4	Leave Omanthali and head up for 10 minutes to a Chetri village and a bridge over a side stream. On the otherside of the bridge start a steep climb up to the very spread out village of Alampu. Keep west of the hamlet on the knoll you see. After a short hour you reach the lower homesteads of Alampu, which is a Thangmi hamlet. Climb through them bearing west until you meet a small hydroelectric pipe descending the hillside. Now roughly climb up the line of the stream it descends from until you reach a plateau. Don't head west along the track across the plateau to Rakham, but continue across the plateau until the climb steepens slightly and climbs through the fields and homesteads of Bigu village. The lower part is ethnically Magar while the upper is Sherpa. You should see some poles with prayer flags fluttering in the wind. The larger Gompa or monastery is just beyond on another plateau under the steep rocky fir/spruce clad mountainside surrounded by Sherpa homesteads, cedars and magnolia trees.
23	Bigu Gompa	Dolangsa	17km	1130	1060	8	Head west through pines for a km when the path dips to an abandoned house. The path continues down passing an old mani with 3 chortens. Descend to the track at a streams confluence and a small hydroelectric plant. The route now climbs for a km up the track before a path cuts off to the north. Take this path up passing a waterfall and woods. The path climbs for a hour then rejoins the track. Follow the track past herders shacks for 2 km until you cross a stream. Avoid the zig-zags of the track by cutting up a forest path clipping the north of each hairpin. After an hour reach massive firs and the path levels off. Continue through trees and herders camps for an hour until you reach the Tinsang La pass, 3280m, and a good view west. Drop very steeply down the west side for 300m until you reach a mani wall and enter the forest. Descend in forest past camps and more mani walls until the path becomes prominent and enters the upper homesteads of Dolangsa. Just above the new 2 storey gompa is the community lodge.
24	Dolangsa	Barhabise	16km	120	1770	8	Leave Dolangsa down the obvious path which veers to the west of the valley forming before you. Soon the path meets a track which contours round the shoulder of a ridge, now high above the valley and continues into a small valley before countouring out to another ridge and the hamlet of Phorteng. There is a path here by a café, right on the spur, which cuts down avoiding the bends of the track and drops down the west side of the spur and above another village, where after a few mani walls you join the track again. Follow the track for many kilometres as it generally contours across the hillside with occasional descents until to reach the Bundari village of Karthali. Pass through this pleasant village and continue countouring along the hillside far above, and to the north of, the valley below until you reach the end of the ridge. The track now zig-zags down the spur, but a good path leaves the track and descends down a series of steps for a hour until you reach the larger town of Barhabise where there are some moderate hotels.
25	Barhabise	Upper Sunkhani	6km	830	20	3.5	Cross the main bridge at Barhabise and immediately to the right is a small lane. Take the lane which soon becomes a track climbing northwards on the west side of the large Sunkosi river. After 2 km the track passes a suspension footbridge. Just after this bridge a path leaves the track and starts a long up the spur. It passes a few homesteads lower down but climbs steeply to meet a track. Either walk up this track or find paths through homesteads and terraced fields, as you make for a large peepal tree and chortens on the spur about 1350m. From here to your south is the same stream which was bridged further down. Continue up the ridge with the homesteads becoming less frequent until the path branches left (south) to cross a stream at about 1600m. Head left here towards the hamlets of Upper Sunkhani and find a homestay here or in the just hamlet before. It is a long path through untamed jungle to Dhuskot and Bokse with wild boar and leopard, and not the place to spend the night if caught by darkness.
26	Upper Sunkhani	Bokse	17km	770	1560	10	From Sunkhani head up to the lip of the bowl at the lower fringe of the forest to follow a vague path south skirting the top of the bowl for 2 km to the Sunkhani Khola ravine and the knoll marked 1802m. Head west to a wide path climbing through pines with the ravine on the south and jungle on the north for ½ hour until it emerges on a grassy ridge with views north to Jugal Himal. After ½ hour reach Gudai, a Tamang village. Now follow the Sunkhani Khola streambed, passing a hamlet and terraces, entering jungle and climbing for ½ hour to arrive on top of a lofty precipice at 2200m, with great views over villages below. The path heads west across the steep airy face to meet the west ridge. Descend to some chortens at a pass and veer north west to terraced fields a jungle track beyond. Follow the track down to Dhuskot and through this large village to reach the spur on the south side of Bokse Khola valley. Follow the spur down past homesteads and cauteria of peepal trees, to reach Bokse and hotels at 800m.
			387km	21800	22670	191.5	