

Kanchenjunga Circuit Trek (KCT) – 18 Days

Overview

- **Country:** Nepal
- **Trip Grade:** Challenging
- **Maximum Altitude:** 5,143m (Kanchenjunga Base Camp)
- **Starts:** Kathmandu
- **Ends:** Kathmandu
- **Group Size:** Min 2 trekkers
- **Best Time:** Spring (Mar–May) & Autumn (Sep–Nov)

The Kanchenjunga Circuit Trek is one of Nepal's most remote and challenging Himalayan adventures. This trek takes you through the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area, offering unparalleled views of the world's third-highest mountain, Kanchenjunga (8,586m).

The trail passes through untouched forests, alpine meadows, rivers, and traditional villages, showcasing the natural and cultural diversity of eastern Nepal. You'll encounter Limbu, Sherpa, and Rai communities, experiencing their unique traditions, festivals, and hospitality.

The trek gradually ascends to high-altitude regions, including the Kanchenjunga Base Camp (5,143m), providing spectacular views of glaciers and snow-capped peaks. This circuit is less crowded than the popular trekking regions, making it ideal for trekkers seeking solitude and pristine landscapes.

Rated challenging, the Kanchenjunga Circuit Trek involves 6–8 hours of trekking per day, with steep ascents and descents. Proper acclimatization, physical fitness, and mental preparation are essential to safely enjoy this extraordinary Himalayan journey.

When To Visit

- **January:** Average
- **February:** Good

- **March:** Best
- **April:** Best
- **May:** Best
- **June:** Good
- **July:** Average
- **August:** Average
- **September:** Best
- **October:** Good
- **November:** Best
- **December:** Average

Itinerary

Day 1: Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu (1,400 m)

☑ Welcome to Nepal! Meet our representative at Tribhuvan International Airport and transfer to your hotel. Relax or explore Thamel's bustling streets in the evening.

Accommodation: Hotel

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Day 2: Day 2: Fly or Drive to Taplejung (1,500 m)

☑ Take a short domestic flight or drive to Taplejung, the starting point for the Kanchenjunga Circuit. Enjoy scenic views of hills, rivers, and villages along the route.

Duration:

- Flight: **45-50 minutes**
- Bhadrapur → Taplejung drive: **8-10 hours**

Accommodation: Guesthouse | **Meals:** Breakfast

Day 3: Day 3: Trek to Lelep (2,500 m) - 5-6 Hours

☑ Begin trekking through forests, small villages, and terraced fields. Lelep is a charming Limbu settlement, offering your first glimpse of the Kanchenjunga range.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4: Day 4: Trek to Yamphudin (2,700 m) - 5-6 Hours

Walk through mixed forests, crossing suspension bridges over rivers. Yamphudin is a traditional Limbu village known for its culture and hospitality.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5: Day 5: Trek to Tseram (2,900 m) - 5-6 Hours

Continue ascending through forested trails, enjoying mountain views and terraced farmland. Tseram is a small highland settlement with scenic vistas of Kanchenjunga.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6: Day 6: Trek to Ramche (3,300 m) - 6-7 Hours

▣ The trail climbs gradually into alpine landscapes. Ramche offers panoramic views of snow capped peaks and high-altitude meadows.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7: Day 7: Trek to Ghunsa (3,450 m) - 5-6 Hours

▣ Trek through open valleys and riverside trails. Ghunsa is a Sherpa village with traditional Buddhist culture and charming teahouses.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8: Day 8: Trek to Kambachen (3,700 m) -5-6 Hours

▣ Ascend through rugged terrain and alpine meadows. Enjoy the pristine surroundings and spectacular views of Kanchenjunga and nearby peaks.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9: Day 9: Trek to Pangpema (4,000 m) - 5-6 Hours

▣ Walk through high-altitude trails with breathtaking vistas. Pangpema is a small camp village, perfect for acclimatization before the base camp.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10: Day 10: Trek to Kanchenjunga Base Camp (5,143 m) - 6-7 Hours

▣ Reach the Kanchenjunga Base Camp, surrounded by towering peaks, glaciers, and snowfields. Enjoy close-up views of the majestic Kanchenjunga.

Accommodation: Camp / Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11: Day 11: Exploration & Acclimatization at Base Camp

☑ Spend the day exploring the surrounding glaciers, viewpoints, and high-altitude landscapes.

Acclimatization ensures safety for the descent.

Accommodation: Camp / Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12: Day 12: Trek to Pangpema (4,000 m) -6 Hours

☑ Begin descending through alpine terrain, retracing the trail with spectacular views of the Kanchenjunga massif.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 13: Day 13: Trek to Kambachen (3,700 m) - 5-6 Hours

☑ Continue descending through high meadows and riversides. Stop at Kambachen for overnight stay.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14: Day 14: Trek to Ghunsa (3,450 m) - 5-6 Hours

☑ Trek back through the beautiful Sherpa village of Ghunsa. Enjoy local culture and hospitality.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 15: Day 15: Trek to Ramche (3,300 m) -5-6 Hours

☑ Retrace your steps through alpine meadows and open valleys. Overnight stay at Ramche.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 16: Day 16: Trek to Tseram (2,900 m) – 5 Hours

☑ Descend through forests and terraced fields, reaching Tseram by evening.

Accommodation: Teahouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 17: Day 17: Trek to Taplejung (1,500 m) -5-6 Hours

☑ Complete the trek by descending to Taplejung. Celebrate the successful completion of the Kanchenjunga Circuit.

Accommodation: Guesthouse | **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 18: Day 18: Fly / Drive back to Kathmandu & Departure

Return to Kathmandu via domestic flight or drive. Transfer to the airport for your onward journey, concluding this extraordinary Himalayan adventure.

Accommodation: – | **Meals:** Breakfast

Cost Details

Cost Includes

- Airport transfers in Kathmandu
- 2 nights hotel in Kathmandu
- Guesthouse / teahouse accommodation during trek
- Meals during trekking (breakfast)
- Kanchenjunga Conservation Area Permit (KCAP)
- TIMS (Trekking Information Management System) Card
- Licensed guide and porter
- Transportation (Kathmandu-Taplejung-Kathmandu via flight/road)
- First aid kit

Cost Excludes

- International airfare
- Nepal visa fee
- Travel insurance (high-altitude trekking coverage recommended)
- Personal expenses (snacks, drinks, souvenirs)
- Hot showers / Wi-Fi charges
- Tips for guide and porter

Trek Essentials

Head & Hands

- Sun hat / cap for daytime walking
- Warm fleece or wool beanie for cold nights

- Sunglasses with UV protection
- Buff or neck gaiter
- Lightweight liner gloves
- Warm insulated gloves for higher altitudes

Upper Body Clothing

- Moisture-wicking base layers
- Trekking T-shirts
- Fleece jacket or mid-layer
- Waterproof/windproof outer shell
- Down jacket for cold evenings & high passes

Lower Body Clothing & Footwear

- Trekking pants (quick-dry & breathable)
- Thermal base layer bottoms for cold days
- Waterproof shell pants
- Sturdy, well-broken-in trekking boots
- Trekking socks (wool or synthetic, multiple pairs)
- Sandals or comfortable camp shoes for evenings
- Gaiters for mud, snow, or dust protection if needed

Backpacks & Gear

- Main duffel bag for porter
- Daypack (30–40L) with rain cover
- Sleeping bag rated -10°C to -15°C
- Headlamp with extra batteries
- Trekking poles (adjustable)
- Water bottles or hydration bladder
- Water purification tablets or filter

Personal & Safety Essentials

- Sunscreen (SPF 50+) & lip balm with SPF
- Basic first aid kit (blister plasters, painkillers, bandages)
- Reusable water bottle

- Power bank / spare batteries
- Quick-dry towel & personal toiletries

Documents & Permits

- Passport & Nepal visa
- Kanchenjunga Conservation Area Permit (KCAP) & TIMS Card
- Travel insurance information
- Emergency contact details