

Kanchenjunga Circuit

REGION	Taplejung
DURATION	22 days
MAX ALTITUDE	5,142 m
GRADE	Strenuous
SEASON	Mar-May · Sep-DE
FROM	from \$4,500

Overview

The complete loop of the third-highest mountain

The full circuit linking both base camps of Kanchenjunga over the high Sele La passes - the longest, wildest teahouse trek in Nepal, walked by only a handful of groups a year.

This trek is renowned for its breathtaking scenery-towering glaciers, glittering Himalayan summits, ancient monasteries, and the rich traditions of Rai, Limbu, and Tibetan-influenced communities. Unlike the crowded trails of Everest or Annapurna, Kanchenjunga remains sparsely visited, preserving its pristine charm and mystery. The journey begins with a flight from Kathmandu to Bhadrapur, followed by trails through dense rhododendron forests, alpine meadows, and high passes such as the Mirgin-La (4,725m), which reveals sweeping views of Chamlang, Makalu, and Everest. Along the way, This area is the home of wildlife, including the elusive Red Panda, Snow Leopard, and Himalayan Black Bear, as well as rare bird species like the Impeyan pheasant. The trek also rewards adventurers with panoramic vistas of peaks such as Jannu (7,710m), Kolang (6,147m), Rathong (6,679m), and five giants rising above 8,000 meters. First summited in 1955 by British climbers Joe Brown and George Band, Kanchenjunga remains a symbol of challenge and grandeur. This demanding expedition requires strong fitness, determination, and the ability to walk six or more hours daily in rugged terrain. With basic facilities but unmatched hospitality from locals, the Kanchenjunga Circuit Trek is a rare opportunity to experience raw Himalayan beauty, cultural diversity, and true wilderness. A special trekking permit is required, ensuring that only committed adventurers take part in this unforgettable journey.

Difficulty, Terrain and Trail condition of the Kanchenjunga Circuit Trek

The Kanchenjunga Circuit is among Nepal's most demanding treks because several hard factors combine rather than a single obvious obstacle. Altitude is a primary challenge: the route climbs repeatedly above 3,500 m and reaches well over 5,000 m on summit view days, so prolonged exposure to thin air taxes both body and mind. Careful pacing, disciplined acclimatization, and conservative decision making are essential to stay safe.

Length and cumulative fatigue add another layer of difficulty. The circuit runs for more than three weeks, with many consecutive days of 6-8 hours on steep ascents and long, punishing descents. Even fit trekkers feel the wear of back to back mountain days, and recovery opportunities are limited in the high valleys.

Trail conditions are rugged and often unpredictable. Expect narrow ridgelines, rocky moraines, scree, and sections of glacial debris; footing can be slippery and uneven, demanding strong legs, balance, and constant concentration. Several high passes (Selele La, Mirgin La, Sinelapcha La, Sinion La) and the

day hike to Pangpema (North Base Camp) involve steep, exposed terrain and occasional landslide scarred approaches.

Remoteness amplifies the challenge. Above Ghunsa the number of lodges dwindles, resupply points are scarce, and medical or evacuation support is limited. Tea shops may offer snacks near base camp approaches, but sleeping options are minimal, so your schedule becomes fixed once you push into the upper valleys. This isolation means you must be self reliant, carry appropriate gear, and accept fewer comforts than on busier routes.

Weather and logistics are additional hurdles. Conditions can swing from clear and warm to icy winds and snowfall within hours; large diurnal temperature swings are common at high elevations. Given the sparse infrastructure, bad weather can force long waits or difficult route choices. For all these reasons, the Kanchenjunga Circuit is best suited to trekkers who are well prepared, experienced at altitude, physically fit, and mentally ready for a sustained, remote high mountain expedition rather than a casual hike.

Highlights

- Full north-south circuit
- Sele La pass traverse
- Five 8,000 m peaks in view
- Deep restricted wilderness

Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrival in Kathmandu

After clearing immigration at Tribhuvan International Airport, our representative holding a Hux-Exped placard will meet you and escort you to your hotel. The drive offers a first glimpse of Kathmandu's bustling streets and culture; after check in the afternoon is free to rest and recover. Many trekkers take a short nearby walk to stretch legs and acclimatize before the journey.

- Accommodation: Hotel
- Meals: on your own

Day 2 - Preparation and briefings

This day is reserved for final preparations and a full gear check. You will sit down with you trek leader for the full briefing of the trek. Missing gears can be rented or bought in Thamel. Our team will collect paperwork, confirm insurance and payments, and give you a Hux-Exped t-shirt, a Kanchenjunga route map, and a cap. The afternoon is free to rest, stroll Kathmandu's markets, or mentally prepare for the trek.

- Accommodation: Hotel
- Meals: Breakfast included

Day 3 - Fly to Bhadrapur and drive to Taplejung (1820m), drive: 260km, duration-8-9 hours

You'll fly from Kathmandu to Bhadrapur (Chandragadhi) - a 50-55 minute domestic flight with stunning Himalayan views - then drive into the hills to Taplejung, the gateway to Kanchenjunga. En route you'll pass rural settlements, terraced farms, and local markets that showcase the region's traditional life.

Taplejung offers comfortable lodge accommodation and full meals to rest and prepare for the trek.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4 - Drive to Sekathum (1650m) 6-7 hours, Distance: 60-70km

After breakfast we drive from Taplejung- enjoy the scenery of waterfalls, terraced fields, and rural villages. About three to four hours in we reach Ranipul, where the road turns rough and unpaved, slowing the journey. A couple more hours bring us to Shekathum, where you can stretch your legs with a short village walk and take in the peaceful mountain life before evening.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5 - Trek to Amjilosa (2400m) 6-7 hours, Distance: 10-12km

Finally, we are hiking!!!We'll set off early from Shekathum for a day that mixes challenge with reward as you head to Amjilasa, the gateway into the Kanchenjunga high valleys. The trail leaves the village and crosses the Ghunsa Khola on a suspension bridge, then climbs into dense rhododendron and bamboo forest with several river crossings along the way. Expect a sequence of steep ascents and short descents over narrow, sometimes uneven paths, passing through a tight valley and the small settlement of Solima. The route remains testing, with rocky sections and frequent elevation changes, until the final climb brings you into Amjilosa - a quiet, high valley stop with basic lodges where you can rest and reflect on a demanding but satisfying day.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6 - Trek to Gyabla (2730m) 6-7 hours, Distance: 12-14km

Your day begins beside the rushing Ghunsa Khola, its steady roar setting the pace as you step onto the trail. You move through dense stands of bamboo, fir, oak, and rhododendron until you reach a solitary stone house tucked near the water. From there the route climbs, crossing wooden bridges and passing a series of waterfalls fed by glacier streams; these sections are scenic but require careful footing. In the quieter reaches of the forest you may be fortunate enough to glimpse a red panda among the branches or notice signs of Himalayan black bear activity. The path climbs toward Pangling Hill, where more suspension bridges punctuate the ascent before you arrive at Dhagnem, a small village of weathered stone houses that reflect generations of mountain life. After one last push through bamboo groves you reach Gyabla, a tranquil settlement shaped by strong Tibetan cultural influences; here only a handful of simple teahouses offer shelter, and the absence of modern development preserves an authentic, peaceful atmosphere for rest and reflection on your Kanchenjunga Circuit journey.

Day 7 - Trek to Ghunsa(3595m) 5-6 hours, Distance: 12-14km

As you gain significant altitude, maintain a steady pace and climb with care. Leaving Gyabla, the trail winds through lush forests, crosses rivers, and requires careful footing on stone ladders and narrow steps. Along the way you pass the Sherpa village of Phale, from which it's roughly three and a half hours to Ghunsa. Phale is home to Pholey Gumba, a Tibetan monastery of deep local significance that houses a rare statue found only in three places-Phale, Dharamshala, and Lhasa-offering a rare glimpse into regional spiritual heritage. Higher on the route the landscape opens up: waterfalls tumble from cliff faces and distant peaks begin to dominate the skyline. Eventually you reach Ghunsa, a tranquil Sherpa village draped in prayer flags where you can visit Tashi Chhyoling Monastery, meet welcoming locals, and enjoy better facilities than earlier stops. Ghunsa provides a comfortable place to rest, recover, and prepare for the higher, more remote sections of the Kanchenjunga journey.

Day 8 - Acclimatization Day

You'll spend your first rest day in the tranquil Sherpa village of Ghunsa, nestled in a high mountain valley-an essential pause to let your body acclimatize before the tougher, higher sections ahead. Keep active but gentle: in the morning take a pleasant walk through lush green forest to the peaceful Laspsan La Monastery, where quiet temple grounds and sweeping mountain views make the short hike both restorative and spiritually uplifting. Return to Ghunsa by afternoon for a relaxed village

stroll; meet warm local families, learn about Sherpa traditions, and absorb the slow rhythm of mountain life. This easy day balances light activity with recovery, helping you regain energy and prepare mentally and physically for the next stage of the Kanchenjunga journey.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Lunch, Dinner, Breakfast

Day 9 - Ghunsa to Kampachen(4050m) 5-6 hours, Distance: 11-12km

From Ghunsa the trail follows the Ghunsa Khola northward, threading through the settlements of Sypchen and Tartang as it climbs. Along the way you'll pass Hajare Odar, a massive stone revered by local Kirant communities for its cultural and spiritual significance - a shelter in legend and an important ritual landmark. The route then leads to Rampuk Kharka Bridge and a nearby waterfall before rising to the Jannu Phaktanglung viewpoint, where the terrain becomes more demanding: unstable landslide slopes, narrow rocky sections, and wooden bridges that require careful, steady footing. As you negotiate these exposed stretches the north face of Mount Jannu comes into view. Continuing along the rocky mountain trail brings you finally to Kambachen, a quiet high valley settlement ringed by towering Himalayan peaks where you will spend the night.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10 - Acclimatization day at Kambachen 2 hours

You'll spend a restorative rest day at Kambachen after two nights in Ghunsa, giving your body crucial time to adapt to the thinner air before moving higher. Kambachen is an ideal mountain sanctuary for acclimatization, offering sweeping views of the dramatic Jannu peak and the surrounding ridgelines. The day is intentionally gentle: rest, enjoy a warm wash, and take short, easy walks into the Nupchu Khola valley to keep your circulation moving without overexertion. These light excursions let you explore the high-altitude landscape while maintaining an appropriate pace for acclimatization; return to Kambachen in the evening to relax, refuel, and prepare for the next stage of the trek.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11 - Trek to Lhonak(4785m) 6-7 hours, Distance: 10-12km

The trek from Kambachen to Lhonak is one of the most demanding stretches on the Kanchenjunga Circuit route, with rocky, boulder strewn slopes and towering Himalayan peaks framing every step. Your first checkpoints are Lumuchhemu and then Ladam, where the harsh alpine landscape begins to press on your endurance. The trail then crosses a hazardous landslide zone that requires careful footing before it drops briefly toward the roaring river below. Soon you'll be rewarded by the sight and sound of Khando Waterfall, which plunges dramatically from the cliffs. From there the path climbs a steep stone ridge, opening spectacular vistas as you approach Ramdang, where a local teahouse offers a welcome rest and refreshment. The ascent continues to Lhonak, where the scenery becomes truly grand: sweeping views of the Kanchenjunga Glacier, and, if you're lucky, blue sheep grazing near the Lhonak River. You finish the day surrounded by snowcapped giants, including the Kanchenjunga massif, Nepal Peak, and Mera Peak.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12 - Trek to Kanchenjunga North Basecamp(5142m) and back to Lhonak(4785m) 9-10 hours, Distance: 10-12km

You cross the Kanchenjunga Glacier on a rocky, uneven trail and first reach Syamjo, a high-altitude camp that marks the start of the glacier section. From Syamjo the path leads onward to the famed Pangpema or North Base Camp, where the landscape opens to vast icefields and towering peaks. At Pangpema you'll enjoy spectacular views of Jannu, Kanchenjunga, and Chang Himal, making it one of the best photography spots on the entire route. From Pangpema the route climbs to Thankpu and

becomes steeper and more demanding as you approach Jorkyu. The terrain here is rough and exposed, so move slowly and deliberately. As you gain height the air thins and the altitude rises above 5,000 m, so steady pacing and careful breathing are essential for safety and comfort. You continue to the Pangpema View Base Camp, a viewpoint that looks toward the North Summit Camp and surrounds you with unforgettable Himalayan scenery. After taking in the views and resting at the viewpoint, you retrace your steps and descend carefully back across the glacier toward Lhonak. The return walk requires the same caution as the ascent because of loose rocks and icy patches. This is a long, high-altitude day that rewards effort with some of the finest mountain panoramas in eastern Nepal.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 13 - Trek back to Ghunsa(3595m) 9-10 hours, Distance: 22-23km

You leave the high, rocky world of Lhonak and begin a long descent that moves through sharply contrasting landscapes. At first the trail crosses loose moraine and scattered boulders, where careful footing is essential as you drop from the glacier fed heights. As altitude falls the terrain softens into grassy slopes and then into dense stands of fir, rhododendron, and bamboo that close around the path and cool the air. The route threads through several friendly Sherpa settlements, each offering a glimpse of daily mountain life. Locals greet trekkers warmly and serve simple, hearty foods such as yak cheese and churpi; these village stops are good moments to rest, chat, and learn about traditional livelihoods. Water is a constant companion on the descent - waterfalls tumble from cliffs, streams cross the trail, and suspension bridges span the valley, their steady sounds creating a calm backdrop to your walk. Approaching Ghunsa, the valley's Buddhist character becomes more visible: colorful prayer flags flutter above trails and small monasteries appear on ridgelines and at village edges. Ghunsa itself is a welcoming Sherpa village with more comfortable lodges than the higher camps, offering a peaceful place to rest, meet warm local families, and reflect on the Kanchenjunga Circuit journey as evening light softens the surrounding peaks.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14 - Trek to Sele Le La Camp(4255m) 6-7 hours, Distance: 10-11km

You leave Ghunsa and begin a steady climb that quickly moves from village paths into thick mountain forest. At lower elevations the trail threads through stands of fir, rhododendron, and bamboo, with occasional clearings that offer early glimpses of surrounding ridgelines. The route starts gently but soon turns into a sustained stone ascent, where switchbacks and rocky steps demand steady pacing and careful footing. Along the way small rest points and teahouses provide chances to catch your breath and refuel. As you gain height the trees thin and open meadows appear, changing the feel of the landscape from enclosed green to wide, windswept slopes. These shifting scenes-forest, rock, and alpine grass-keep the walk engaging and help break the climb into manageable sections. After several hours of climbing, you reach Sele La Camp at about 4,355 m, a quiet, remote spot high in the mountains. The camp sits above the treeline and feels peaceful and exposed, with broad views of the high peaks and valleys below. Few trekkers pass this way, so the atmosphere is remote and contemplative - an ideal place to rest and prepare for the next stage of the Kanchenjunga Circuit.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 15 - Trek to Tseram(3870m) Via Sele la pass (4480) 9-10 hours, Distance: 20Km

You set out early from Ghunsa and begin a steady climb that soon leaves village paths behind and climbs into open mountain country. The trail starts through thick forest and then turns into a long stone ascent with frequent switchbacks; small rest points and teahouses appear occasionally to break the climb. As you gain height the trees thin and meadows open, offering widening views of ridgelines

and distant peaks. From the ridge you'll cross Sele La at about 4,480 m, a high saddle that reveals dramatic panoramas: Kumbakarna rising from Kanchenjunga's south face, Makalu far on the horizon, and the jagged profile of Jannu Himal nearby. The route continues over several high passes - Sinion La, Mirgin La (around 4,646 m), and Sinelapche Bhanjyang - each giving broad, rewarding views and a clear sense of the region's spiritual and wild character. Beyond the passes the trail becomes rougher, with steep climbs and sharp drops, rocky sections, and occasional scree. You'll pass a blue alpine lake and see yaks carrying supplies across the high ground, reminders of how life and logistics work here. By late afternoon you descend into Cheram, a small village with a few teahouses (some still under construction); lodging is limited but welcoming, and the village offers a quiet place to rest after one of the most memorable and demanding days on the Kanchenjunga Circuit.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 16 - Trek from Cheram to Ramche(4580m) and hike to Oktang (4730m), 6-7 hours, Distance: 12-13km

You leave Cheram and climb steadily along the edge of the Yalung Glacier, the Simbuwa Khola running close by and adding a steady, calming soundtrack to the ascent. The trail moves from forested slopes into more open, rocky ground as you gain height; switchbacks and stone steps demand steady pacing and careful footing. At Napsangla Pass the valley opens and wide Himalayan views unfold, giving a clear sense of the high country you are entering. Ramche sits beneath dramatic peaks and feels remote and windswept; from here the slopes often hold grazing blue sheep, which you may spot moving quietly across the high grass. The day's highlight is the hike up to Oktang, where Kanchenjunga's vast southern face fills the horizon and offers unforgettable photographic opportunities. After soaking in the views you return to Ramche for the night, where a few simple teahouses provide basic shelter and a chance to rest and refuel before the next stage.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 17 - Trek to Torongding(2995m) via Anda Phedi 7-8 hours, Distance: 16-17km

You leave the high, windswept slopes of Ramche and begin a long descent that moves through changing terrain: rocky ridges and open alpine meadows give way to thicker forests as you lose altitude. The trail crosses the Simbuwa Khola several times, with wooden bridges and stream fords punctuating the walk and the constant sound of water accompanying your steps. Along the route you pass small villages such as Cheram and Anda Phedi, where stone houses, stacked hay, and friendly faces offer natural rest points and a glimpse into local daily life. These village stops are more than breaks; they let you meet residents, sample simple mountain foods, and learn about livelihoods shaped by the high country. The landscape keeps shifting-sunlit meadows, shaded bamboo groves, and mossy forest floors-so the descent never feels monotonous. By evening you drop into the peaceful valley settlement of Torongden, where a few teahouses provide basic but welcoming beds and hot meals, giving you a comfortable place to rest after a long day on the trail.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 18 - Trek from Torongding to yasang (1430m) 5-6 hours, Distance: 10km

You leave Torongden and descend through dense woodland where rhododendron, pine, and oak form a green canopy above the trail. The Simbuwa Khola runs close by, its steady flow and the sound of birds keeping the walk peaceful. Small clearings open now and then, offering quick glimpses of distant peaks that remind you the high Kanchenjunga range still looms nearby. The path rolls gently up and down, making for steady progress without long, hard climbs. Along the way you may meet herders with yaks and mules carrying supplies between villages, a quiet reminder of how people live and work in these mountains. Brief stops in tiny settlements give chances to rest and watch daily life unfold. By afternoon you reach Yasang at about 2,870 m, a simple village with a few quiet teahouses.

Lodgings are basic but welcoming, and the calm setting with nearby ridge views makes Yasang a good place to stop and prepare for the next stage of the Kanchenjunga Circuit.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 19 - Yaksa to Zero kilo(3hrs) or Hellock(5-6 hours, 15km) and drive to Taplejung(70km) 4.5hours

You leave Yasang on a steady descent through mixed forest and rocky stretches, following small streams and the Simbuwa Khola as the trail winds downward. Keep an eye out for colorful birds and occasional Himalayan wildlife, and enjoy brief stops in traditional settlements that offer a window into rural life. By midday you reach Hellok, where the trek ends and you transfer by jeep along scenic mountain roads toward Taplejung. The drive through valleys and riverside paths completes the journey, leaving you with lasting memories of high passes, remote villages, and the Kanchenjunga peaks.

- Accommodation: Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 20 - Drive to Bhadrapur(8-9hours, 260km) and fly to Kathmandu (55 minutes)

After breakfast you drive from Taplejung toward Bhadrapur, winding through terraced hills, small villages, and farmland that show everyday life in eastern Nepal. Arriving in Bhadrapur by late afternoon, you catch a short flight back to Kathmandu; on clear days the plane offers one last panoramic view of the Himalayan skyline. When you land at Tribhuvan Domestic Airport you'll be transferred to your hotel in the city. The evening is free to rest, take a hot shower, or stroll Kathmandu's lively streets and reflect on your Kanchenjunga journey.

- Accommodation: Hotel
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 21 - Contingency day

A contingency day is a built-in buffer to handle bad weather, slow progress, or minor health issues without rushing the trek. Use this day to rest, recover, and let the group regroup if needed; it reduces pressure on following days and improves safety at high altitude.

- Accommodation: Hotel/Guest House
- Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 22 - Departure or in Kathmandu

You can either have flight back home or stay in Kathmandu for one more night to rest and look around some world heritage sites in Kathmandu.

- Accommodation: N/A
- Meals: N/A

What's included

- Restricted-area & national-park permits
- Licensed guide + full support crew
- Teahouse / homestay accommodation
- All ground transport & domestic flights
- Pre-trip briefing & gear check
- 5% funds village schools & health posts

Not included

- International flights to/from Nepal
- Travel & high-altitude insurance
- Personal trekking & climbing gear
- Nepal entry visa fees
- Tips for guides and porters
- Personal expenses (drinks, wifi, laundry)

Available departures

- 15 Mar 2026
- 02 Apr 2026
- 21 Apr 2026
- 12 May 2026
- 18 Sep 2026
- 06 Oct 2026