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Manaslu Circuit Trek

URL: https://www.nepalriverrunner.com/river/manaslu-circuit-trek/

Starting Point
Kathmandu

Duration
12 Days

Best Seasons
Spring (March – May) & Autumn (September – November)

Ending Point
Kathmandu

What Makes the Manaslu Circuit Trek so Special?

- Witness the highest peaks in the world like Mount Manaslu (8,163 m), Lamjung Himal, Himalchuli (7,893m), and Annapurna II (7,937 m).
- Explore the Manaslu Conservation Area, home to over 2,000 plant species, 110 bird species, and 33 species of mammals.
- Trek alongside the Budhi Gandaki River and the valley.
- Experience the Tibetan-influenced culture in villages like Namrung, Lho, and Samagaun.
- Visit the ancient Ribung Gompa in Lho and Pungyen Gompa near Samagaun.
- Conquer the Larkya La Pass (5,106 m), the highest point of the trek, which offers extra mountain views like Himlung (7,126 m), Cheo Himal, and Gyaji Kang (7,038 m).
- Walk through multiple climate zones, from sub-tropical forests near Maccha Khola to high alpine landscapes at Larkya La.
- Enjoy less crowded trails compared to Everest and Annapurna.

Overview of Manaslu Circuit Trek

If you think walking around your local park is a trek, then the Manaslu Circuit Trek will politely laugh in your face. The 12-day Manaslu Circuit Trek is a challenging but very rewarding adventure that circles around Mount Manaslu, the eighth-highest Mountain in the world at 8,163 m. It is located in the Gorkha region of Nepal, which is stretched through the Manaslu Conservation Area, bordering Tibet. What makes it special? It offers jaw-dropping views of Himalayan landscapes, Tibetan-influenced culture, and fewer crowds than Everest or Annapurna. This trek covers around 177 km (110 miles) and ranges in altitude from 700 meters to 5,106 meters, making it one of the interesting and adventurous journeys in Nepal.

The trek starts with a drive from Kathmandu to Soti Khola, which takes around 8-9 hours. From there, the trail begins along the bank of the **Budhi Gandaki River (197 km).** As you walk north, you'll pass through Jagat, which is the checkpoint village for permits, followed by Philim and Deng, where the Tibetan culture starts to emerge. The path then continues to Namrung and Lho, offering the first view of Manaslu Himal. You'll trek through rhododendron forests, across suspension bridges, and observe mani walls and monasteries that reflect the strong Buddhist culture in the Manaslu region.

By the time you reach Samagaun, one of the largest villages on the trail, you'll be surrounded by the Himalayan peaks like **Himalchuli (7,893 m) and Ngadi Chuli (7,871 m).** This is the main acclimatization stop, with options for side hikes to Manaslu Base Camp (4,800 m) or the Pungyen Gompa, a hidden monastery with great glacier views. After Samagaun, the trail continues to Samdo and then to Dharamsala, also known as **Larkya Phedi**, which is the base of the high pass. Early in the next morning, you'll cross the Larkya La Pass (5,160 m), the highest point of the trek that offers breathtaking views of Himlung (7,126 m), Cheo Himal (6,182 m), and Annapurna II (7,937 m).

Now, the descent from the pass takes you to the Bhimtang Valley. As you continue down to Tilije and **Dharpani**, the climate slowly becomes warm and the greenery returns, marking the end of the alpine zone. From Dharapani, a drive brings you to Besisahar and finally to Kathmandu, completing a truly incredible journey. For day-to-day information, you can check the itinerary below.

12 Days Manaslu Circuit Trek Itinerary

Day 1: Drive from Kathmandu to Soti Khola (710 m)

Your journey on the Manaslu Circuit Trek begins with an early morning drive from Kathmandu. Leaving the city behind, you'll head through Thankot and pass the town of Dhulikel. As the drive continues, you'll follow Prithvi Highway, passing through Malekhu. The road then takes you to Dhading Besi, the district headquarters, where the blacktop ends. From there, the road turns into a bumpy road that passes through villages like Arughat and Arkhet. You'll be driving beside the Budhi Gandaki River with the beautiful views of terraced farms, waterfalls, and villages.

After a while, you'll finally reach Soti Khola (710 m). **Soti Khola** is a better acclimatization place, and you'll have a fuller trekking experience than in Maccha Khola, which is a little far from here. This Soti Khola settlement marks the starting point of the actual trek. Here you'll stay in a cozy teahouse where fresh meals are served with warm hospitality. You'll spend your beautiful night in this teahouse, which is surrounded by the river, quiet hills, and the cool air, that'll prepare you for the trekking journey that begins the next day.

- **Top altitude:** 1,430 m (Arughat)
- **Distance & Duration:** 140–160 km (8–9 hours)
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse
- **Meals:** Lunch and Dinner

Day 2: Trek from Soti Khola to Dobhan (1,070 m)

Your first day on foot begins from Soti Khola, where you'll follow a trail along the banks of the Budhi Gandaki River. The path passes through dense sal forests, small waterfalls, and rocky ridges. After about an hour, you'll reach Lapubesi (884 m), a Gurung village known for its terraced fields and beautiful mountain views. From here, the path drops down to the riverbanks before reaching Khanibesi, another small village that offers stunning views of Ganesh Himal (7,422 m) on a clear day.

Continuing on, you'll cross a suspension bridge over the Budhi Gandaki River and arrive at Machha Khola (869 m). You'll stay here for a short tea break and continue your journey. After Macha Khola, the trail leads to Khorlabesi (970 m), and soon you'll reach Tatopani, which means "hot water" in Nepali. This place is known for its natural hot spring, although it's not always active. After a short walk from here, you'll cross another suspension bridge and finally reach Dobhan (1,070 m). Here, you'll rest and sleep in a teahouse, enjoying a hot and warm meal.

- **Top altitude:** 1,070 m (Dobhan)
- **Distance & Duration:** 15–17 km (6–7 hours)
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 3: Trek from Dobhan to Philim (1,570 m)

Leaving Dobhan, the trail starts with a walk along the Budhi Gandaki River, then slowly passes through thick forests and narrow gorges. After about an hour, you'll reach Thulo Dhunga. As you continue, you'll cross a suspension bridge and reach Yaru Phat (1,140 m), a small settlement with wide riverbanks and scenic views. From here, you'll climb a well-built stone staircase known as the 22-step staircase, which is one of the unique features of the route. After the stairs, you'll cross another suspension bridge over the Budhi Gandaki, leading you towards Jagat (1,340 m).

Jagat is a village where your permits are officially checked by the ACAP Office staff. From Jagat, the trail ascends to Salleri, where you get distant views of Siringi Himal (7,161 m). You'll pass through rocky cliffs, terraced fields, and waterfalls before reaching the village of Philim (1,570 m). Philim is a village known for its Gurung culture and school supported by Japanese aid. You'll rest here in a cozy homestay, enjoying a hot meal and the peaceful mountain atmosphere.

- **Top altitude:** 1,570 m (Philim)
- **Distance & Duration:** 11–13 km (5–6 hours)
- **Accommodation:** Homestays
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 4: Trek from Philim to Ghap (2,250 m)

After a peaceful night in Philim, you'll continue your trek north through millet fields and pine-covered slopes. You'll first pass Ekle Bhatti, a resting point where the trail splits, one path leads to Tsum Valley, while the other leads to Manaslu Circuit. The walk from here is peaceful and scenic, with fewer villages and more nature. As you move deeper into the valley, you'll pass through a narrow gorge, walk along the high cliffs, and finally through a bamboo forest that adds a magical touch to the trek. Soon, you'll reach

Nyangphedi, followed by a short but steep climb to the village of Deng (1,860 m). Deng is known as the entry point into the region influenced by Tibetan culture. You'll notice chortens, mani stones, and prayer flags decorating the trail.

After Deng, the trek takes you to **Bihi Phedi,** where you might spot langurs (gray monkey) or colorful birds. Then the final stretch passes by Bihi village, with a view of Kutang Himal (6,508 m), and then finally to Ghap (2,250 m). Ghap is a stone village with homestays and stunning views of the surrounding green hills and distant snow peaks like *Siringi Himal (7,161 m), Buddha Himal (6,672 m), and Manaslu North (7,157 m).* It's a perfect place to rest and prepare for the upcoming elevations ahead.

- **Top altitude:** 2,250 m (Ghap)
- **Distance & Duration:** 15–17 km (6–7 hours)
- **Accommodation:** Homestays
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 5: Trek from Ghap to Lho (3,180m)

On this day, you'll leave Ghap and follow the trail along the Budhi Gnadaki, passing through forests filled with pine and rhododendrons. Early in the morning, the forest is fresh and peaceful. After a short walk, you'll reach Namrung (2,630 m), a checkpoint village with a mix of Tibetan and Gurung cultures. This is a great place to rest, as it offers the first clear views of Siringi Himal (7,161 m).

From Namrung, the trail passes gradually through Bhanjam, Lihi, and Sho, beautiful stone villages with traditional architecture and barley fields. Along the way, you'll get stunning views of Ganesh Himal (7,422 m) and Himalchuli (7,893 m). After a few hikes, you'll reach Lho (3,180 m). Lho is a scenic village that is home to Ribung Monastery, which offers a direct and breathtaking view of Mount Manaslu (8,163 m). You'll stay in a teahouse here, enjoying the views, culture, and comfort at a higher altitude.

- **Top altitude:** 3,180 m (Lho)
- **Distance & Duration:** 10–12 km (5–6 hours)
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 6: Trek from Lho to Samagaun

The day begins with a stunning sunrise view over Mount Manaslu from Lho. As you leave the village, the trail ascends through a forest of pines and firs. Soon, you'll reach Shyala (3,500 m), one of the most panoramic spots on the trek. From here, as you walk forward, you'll be surrounded by snow-covered peaks like Manaslu Himal Chuli (7,893 m), Ngadi Chuli (7,871 m), and Ganesh Himal (7,422 m).

From Shyala, the path continues across glacial streams and rocky terrain, leading to the valley of Samagaun (3,530 m). This large traditional village is culturally rich, with Tibetan-style stone houses and spinning prayer wheels. Along the way, you'll also pass chortens, mani walls, and the icy waters of the **Pungyen Glacier** nearby. Here you'll stay overnight in a teahouse, which is a perfect place to rest, explore, and prepare for the higher altitude.

- **Top altitude:** 3,530 m (Samagaun)

- **Distance & Duration:** 7–8 km (4–5 hours)
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 7: Rest day in Samagaun

Day 7 is your well-earned rest day in Samagaun, but it's not boring. To help your body adjust to the altitude, you'll go on a short acclimatization hike. The most popular option is a hike around Manaslu Base Camp (4,800 m) if you are strong enough to hike for 6-7 hours. If you prefer something easier, then you can hike to **Birendra Lake (3,650 m)**, a glacial lake just a short walk from the village.

Back in Samagaun, take the time to explore the Pungyen Gompa, a monastery located on a ridge with mountain views. You can also explore the village, interact with locals, or relax in a teahouse with a warm meal. This day not only helps with altitude adjustment but also helps to connect with nature and the locals, who are very humble and innocent.

- **Top altitude:** Up to 4,800 m (optional hike to Manaslu Base Camp) or 4,100 m (Birendra Lake)
- **Distance & Duration:** 3–15 km (2–7 hours-depending on the side trip chosen)
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 8: Trek from Samagaun to Samdo

Leaving Samagaun, the trail ascends along the bank of the Budhi Gandaki River, offering views of the open valley and glaciers. The path is easy and open, passing by yak pastures as you head towards a higher altitude. About halfway, you'll come across the Maniwa village ruins, abandoned after an old landslide, which adds a sense of history to the journey. As you move further, the views of Mount Manaslu, **Naike Peak (6,311 m)**, and Samdo Glacier become clearer.

After 3-4 hours of trekking, you'll reach Samdo (3,860 m), the last permanent settlement before the pass. This small village is just a few kilometers away from the Tibetan border, surrounded by dry hills, snowy peaks, and prayer flags. You can explore the village, visit a small Gompa, or hike up to a nearby ridge for better views of the Tibetan plateau, Manaslu, and Larkye Peak (6,249 m). Here, you will stay in a small teahouse where you'll be served with warm and nutritious meals.

- **Top altitude:** 3,860 m (Samdo)
- **Distance & Duration:** 8–9 km (4–5 hours)
- **Accommodation**: teahouse
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 9: Trek from Samdo to Dharamsala (4,460 m)

On this day, the trek from Samdo begins with a descent across a wooden bridge over the Budhi Gandaki River. The landscape here is dry and open with fewer trees and more mountain views. As you climb higher, you'll see the Larkye Glacier on your left and Larkye Peak (6,249 m) ahead. Along the way, you

might spot Himalayan blue sheep grazing on the slopes or large birds like lammergeiers flying in the clear sky.

After 3-4 hours of walking, you'll reach Dharamsala, also known as Larkye Phedi. This outpost is used to cross Larkye La Pass the next morning. Though the accommodation here is simple, the surroundings are stunning, surrounded by snowy peaks, rocky cliffs, and streams. You'll spend the afternoon resting and acclimatizing in the small teahouse. This is your final stop before one of the most exciting days of the trek.

- **Top altitude:** 4,460 m (Dharamsala)
- **Distance & Duration:** 6–7 km (4–5 hours)
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 10: Trek from Dharamsala to Bhimtang (3,720 m) via Larkya La Pass (5,106 m)

Today is the most challenging and rewarding day of this trek. You'll start early, around 4-5 AM, from **Dharamsala,** climbing over a rocky trail. The path takes you through moraine fields, frozen lakes, and along the Larkye Glacier, surrounded by snow-covered mountains. After 3-4 hours of climbing, you'll reach the top of the Larkya La Pass (5,106 m), the highest point of the Manaslu Circuit Trek. From there, you'll witness jaw-dropping views of Mount Manaslu, Himlung Himal, Cheo Himal, Gyaji Kang, and Annapurna II.

After observing the views and capturing photos, you'll begin the steep descent towards Bhimtang (3,720 m). The path is long, but the environment is so beautiful and quiet. As you drop in altitude, you'll notice the trees, rivers, and alpine beauty. Bhimtang is surrounded by mountains and forests, and feels like a hidden paradise. You'll stay here in a comfortable teahouse, resting after one of the most unforgettable days of your journey.

- **Top altitude:** 5,106 m (Larkya La Pass)
- **Distance & Duration:** 22–24 km (8–10 hours)
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 11: Trek from Bhimtang to Dharapani

After a long walk in the Himalayas, today's trek feels like walking into a green world. Leaving Bhimtang (3,720 m), the trail passes through alpine meadows with a stunning view of Mount Manaslu, Lamjung Himal, and Himlung Himal behind you. You'll pass by Ponkar Lake and cross Suru Khola. As you drop further in altitude, forests of pine, oak, and rhododendron welcome you back to the warmer landscapes.

Walking on, you'll trek through villages like Kharche and Gho. You'll cross many wooden bridges over the Dudh Khola (a major river flowing from the glacier), enjoying the sounds of flowing water and birds. After 6-7 hours of walking, you'll finally reach Dharapani (1,960 m), a village that connects with the Annapurna Circuit trail. Here, you can celebrate the end of your trek with a hot meal in a cozy teahouse.

- **Top altitude:** 1,860 m (Dharapani)
- **Distance & Duration:** 18–20 km (7–8 hours)
- **Accommodation:** Teahouse
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 12: Drive from Dharapani (1,960 m) to Besisahar (760 m) and then to Kathmandu

Your final day begins with a jeep ride from Dharapani (1,960 m) to Besisahar (760 m). The drive follows the Marsyangdi River (150 km), passing through villages like Tal, known for its beautiful waterfall, and Chamje. The road offers stunning views of green valleys, cliffs, and streams. Along the way, you'll get one last look at the peaks of the Annapurna and Manaslu ranges as you leave the high mountains behind.

From Besisahar, you'll switch to a more comfortable vehicle and continue to drive towards Kathmandu, which takes around 6-7 hours depending on traffic. After nearly 2 weeks in the mountains, arriving in the capital feels strange and satisfying. As you return to the city, you'll carry memories of remote villages, tall peaks, ancient culture, and the pride of completing the 12-day Manaslu Circuit Trek

- **Top altitude:** 1,960 m (Dharapani)
- **Distance & Duration:** Dharapani to Besisahar: 65 km (3–4 hours)by jeep/bus, Besisahar to Kathmandu: 175 km (6–7 hours) by jeep/bus
- **Accommodation:** Hotel
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Manaslu Circuit Trek After COVID: What's Different Now

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism in the Manaslu circuit trek has dropped sharply. *There were only 375 foreigners who trekked in early 2020, compared to 6,070 in the same period of 2019*. This sudden loss of tourists led many locals to close their lodges, switch to farming, or search for other jobs elsewhere. Some teahouses were closed for a month, while guides and porters were struggling to find an alternative source of income. However, it reopened earlier than many routes, and thanks to the trail restoration led by the Manaslu Conservation Area Project, the Manaslu trek recovered slowly, bridges were repaired, paths were cleared, allowing treks to resume their journey safely by late 2021.

Today, the bounce back is impressive. In 2022, approximately 7,640 foreign trekkers visited Manaslu, more than six times the number in 2021. In 2023, visitor numbers increased to 9,177 in total, rising to around 10,600 trekkers in 2024, an increase of about 1,500 compared to 2023. And in early 2025 alone, 1,150 foreigners reached the trail between January and March, more than double the same period in 2024. With improvements in infrastructure, a rising number of lodges, and continuous updates in permits for 2025 and 2026, Manaslu is clearly re-establishing itself as a top trekking destination.

Manaslu Circuit vs Everest and Annapurna: A Trekker's Better Choice

Feature	Manaslu Circuit Trek	Everest Base Camp Trek	Annapurna Circuit Trek
Trek duration	12-14 days	14-16 days	15-18 days
Maximum altitude	5,106 m (Larkya La Pass)	5,364 m (Everest Base Camp)	5,416 m (Thorong La Pass)
Crowd level	Less crowded, peaceful	Very popular, often crowded	Moderately busy
Scenery	Raw Himalayan beauty, remote valleys	Towering peaks, Shepa villages	Good Mountain views, cultural diversity
Main Peaks Seen	Manaslu (8,163 m), Himlung Himal (7,126 m), Ganesh Himal (7,422 m)	Mount Everest (8,8848,86 m), Lhotse (8,516 m), Ama Dablam (6,812 m)	Annapurna I (8,091 m), Dhaulagiri (8,167 m), Machhapuchhre (6,993 m)
Cultural Experience	Tibetan influenced,	Sherpa culture	Gurung, Thakali, Tibetan mix
Off-the-Beaten Path	Yes, quiet and less commercial	No, well-trodden route	Partially, busier in the main areas
Accessibility	Drive to Soti Khola	Flight to Lukla	Drive to Besisahar

Verdict: *If you're looking for fewer crowds, raw nature, and real culture. The Manaslu Circuit Trek offers a more peaceful and rewarding Himalayan adventure.*

Can First-Timers and Older Trekkers Do the Manaslu Trek?

Yes, first-time trekkers and older hikers (even above 60) can definitely complete the 12-day Manaslu Circuit trek, but with the right preparation and support. The trek reaches a high point of 5,106 meters at **Larkya La Pass**, which requires good physical fitness, slow pacing, and proper acclimatization days. Many first-time trekkers have successfully completed this journey with the help of a licensed guide and porters, and by following the 12-day itinerary. The trail includes long walking hours (5-7 hours per day), tough landscapes, and altitude change, so it's best to start physical training like walking, hiking, or light cardio at least 6-8 weeks before the trek.

If you're over 10 and 65, you can still do the Manaslu trek safely if you're in good health, have no serious heart or lung conditions, and trek with medical insurance that covers high-altitude trekking. In recent years, many seniors from Europe and North America aged 60-70, as well as many kids aged above 10, have completed this trek with extra rest days and staff support. The key factor is to go slow, stay hydrated, and listen to your body. It's not about being young- it's about being prepared.

Unique Art and Handicrafts available only in Manaslu

Villages?

The remote villages along the Manaslu Circuit are home to unique and culturally rich handicrafts. One of the main items is the **handwoven woolen rug** crafted in villages like Samagaun and Lho, made from yak and sheep wool. You'll also find woven textiles used for traditional clothing, handcrafted silver jewelry, and prayer flags, often made by monks or villagers in monasteries. Another local gem is Thangka painting, a sacred Buddhist art form painted on cotton or silk that depicts deities and mandalas, made with mineral-based natural dyes. These items represent the spiritual and cultural identity of the **Nubri** and **Tsum Valley** people.

Most of these crafts are created during the off-season, when farming is paused and the entire family gathers to work together. For you, the best places to find such items are Samagaun, Lho, and Philim, where small community-run shops or monastery markets sell these pieces. Avoid buying a huge number of goods from roadside vendors in lower villages; instead, ask the owners of the teahouse or guides to point you towards genuine artisans. Purchasing directly from villagers supports local livelihoods and helps to preserve Manaslu's cultural heritage.

Permits that Open the Gates to Manaslu

There are mainly three permits required for the Manaslu Circuit trek. The first one is the Manaslu Restricted Area Permit (MRAP). It was introduced in 1991 by the Government of Nepal. It is mandatory for all foreign trekkers who are passing from Jagat to Dharapani. The permit costs USD 100 per person for the first 7 days (September -November) and USD 15 for each additional day. During the rest of the year, the cost is USD 75 for the first 7 days and $15 extra for each additional day.

The second permit is the **Manaslu Conservation Area Permit (MCAP).** It was established in 1997 by the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC). It is required from Philim onwards and costs NPR 3,000 (about USD 23) per person. This permit helps in fund conservation, wildlife protection, and sustainable development projects in the region.

The third main permit is the **Annapurna Conservation Area Permit (ACAP).** It was launched in 1986 by the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (now NTNC). It was Nepal's first and largest conservation area project. The fee for this trek permit is NPR 3,000 (about USD 23) per person. ACAP focuses on protecting biodiversity, managing waste, and protecting ecotourism.

Accommodations along the Manaslu Trek

- **Teahouse (Lodges)**

Teahouses are the most common and convenient accommodation option on the Manaslu Circuit Trek. These are small lodges run by a family that offer a room with shared toilets, warm blankets, and home-cooked meals. You can find teahouses in almost every major stop like Soti Khola, Samagaun, Samdo, Lho, and Dharapani. The menu usually includes dalbhat (rice and lentils), noodles, pancakes, soups, fried rice, and tea or coffee. Teahouses are budget-friendly and a great place to rest and meet with locals.

- **Homestays**

Homestay offers a more authentic cultural experience by allowing you to stay with the local families.

They are mostly found in smaller or remote villages like Ghap, Namrung, and Philim. Rooms are simple and comfortable with shared facilities, but the hospitality is warm and personal. You'll eat what the family eats, like dal bhat, chapati, yak milk tea, and sometimes homemade bread or butter tea. Homestays are perfect for those who want to learn about the local lifestyle and traditions.

- **Camping (only if you're feeling extra adventurous)**

Camping is less common now, but is still used in remote areas or during customized treks. You'll sleep in tents and need a full new crew for cooking and logistics. Or you can cook for yourself, but that is full of overload. It's a good option when teahouses are closed or full, especially in early or late seasons. Camping is more expensive and less convenient; however, it can be a wilderness experience in areas like between Larkya Phedi and Bhimtang.

Amenities to Expect (or not)

- **Toilets:** Most squat style, some Western-style in mid-range teahouse
- **Showers Solar or gas:** Heated showers are available for an extra charge (NPR 300- NPR 400)
- **Electricity/Charging:** Pay-to-charge your device (NPR 200- 500 per hour)
- **WiFi:** Available in a few places for free. Translation: slow, expensive, but good for posting at least one "Look, I'm alive!" photo.
- **Dining:** Warm communal dining rooms with a fireplace in the center.

Perfect time for the Manaslu Circuit Trek

Season	Temperautre	Top Features	Best to Go?
Spring (March – May)	Day: 10°C to 20°C Night: -6°C to 5°C	blooming Rhododendrons, clear skies, great mountain views, stable weather	Yes- Ideal season
Summer/ Monsoon (June – August)	Day: 15°C to 25°C Night: 5°C to 10°C	Lush greenery, fewer trekkers, but heavy rain, landslides, and leeches	No- Not recommended
Autumn (September – November)	Day: 12°C to 22°C Night: -4°C to 6°C	Best visibility, festive atmosphere, mild weather, perfect trail conditions	Yes -Peak season
Winter (December – February)	Day: 5°C to 12°C Night: 10°C to -15°C	Snow-capped landscapes, very quiet trails, risk of hiking to Larkya La Pass due to freezing temperatures	Maybe- Only for experienced trekkers

Packing List for Manaslu Circuit Trek

Clothing

- Moisture-wicking base layers (top and bottom)
- Insulated down jacket (for cold nights)
- Waterproof and windproof jacket
- Trekking pants
- Fleece or softshell jacket
- Thermal underwears
- Warm hat and sun hat

- Lightweight gloves and insulated gloves
- Buff or neck gaiter

Footwear

- Waterproof trekking boots (well broken-in)
- Camp shoes or sandals
- Wool or synthetic socks
- gaiters

Bags and Storage

- 40- 50L backpack (with rain cover)
- Duffel bag (carried by porter)
- Dry bags or ziplocks (to keep gear dry and organized)
- Warm sleeping bag (rated at least -10°C/ 14°F)

Personal Hygiene and Toiletries

- Biodegradable soap and shampoo
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Wet wipes (for no-shower days)
- Quick-dry towel
- Hand sanitizer
- Sunscreen (SPF 30+) and Lip balm too
- Toilet paper
- Small first-aid kit

Documents and Permits

- Passport and photocopies
- Nepal Tourist Visa (visa duration should be a minimum of 15 days)
- Travel insurance (with emergency evacuation that should cover high-altitude trekking and helicopter rescue (up to 5,000m)
- Passport-size photo (2-4 copies)

FAQs About Manaslu Circuit Trek

What time should I wake up each trekking day?

You should wake up at nearly 6:00 AM to avoid afternoon clouds and complete the trek before dark. Most days last for 5 to 7 hours, so a 6 AM start will help you reach the teahouse by mid-afternoon, allowing rest, acclimatization, and time to enjoy the mountain sunsets. This routine helps you to prevent altitude sickness and fatigue, too.

Do I need to bring cash on the trek?

Yes, you need to carry at least USD 200-250 in cash for teahouses, tips, snacks, and emergencies. Most of the places don't take cards, and ATM machines are only in larger towns like Dharapani. If you run out of money, then you may face some problems. So, having enough cash gives flexibility and makes you stress-free.

How often are lodge beds cleaned?

Teahouse beds are generally cleaned and aired daily, but the luxury may vary according to the village. In popular stops like Samagaun or Dharapani, beds are refreshed each morning. In smaller places like Ghap or Dharamsala, cleaning may happen every other day.

Can I charge electronics on the trail?

Yes, most teahouse offers a charging port for NPR 300-500 per charge, but availability and reliability may vary. Some smaller lodges may lack electricity all day and rely on solar power. Carrying a power bank or small solar charger can give you a backup, especially during heavy rain or at high altitudes where the availability of electricity is minimal.

Do toilets have hot water?

No. Toilets along the trail usually offer cold water only. Hot water is only available for showers in larger teahouses like Philim, Samagaun, or Dharapani for a small fee. Most smaller lodges and high-altitude stops only provide cold water, or none, so do bring the wet wipes or toilet paper by yourself.

Can I go solo, or do I need a guide?

Solo trekking is not allowed in the Manaslu Circuit. A licensed guide and at least one companion are required because Manaslu is a restricted trekking region. Guides also help you with route-finding, altitude safety, culture, and local support, making them essential partners for safety and compliance.

Is drinking river water safe on the trek?

No, drinking unfiltered river water is not safe. You must boil it, use purification tablets, or a filter bottle. The Budhi Gandaki appears clean and clear, but may contain bacteria or glacial sediments. Most teahouses charge for boiled water, but bringing purification tools helps you to stay hydrated throughout the trek.

Can vegetarians eat well on the trail?

Yes, vegetarians can eat well on the trail. They will find dal-bhat, noodles, pancakes, soups, and vegetable momos available anywhere. Most teahouses cater to non-meat diets. You can inform your guide ahead of time, and they'll help you get enough protein and calories through lentils, eggs, paneer, or nuts.

Is there a strong risk of a landslide in the monsoon?

Yes, landslide risk is high during monsoon (Jun-Aug) because heavy rain weakens the slopes. Many local

roads and trails become unsafe or blocked. While rain-softened trails may still be passable, it may take more days. This is why monsoon is not that much recommended for trekking here.

Do teahouses offer laundry services?

Yes, teahouses in villages ike Philim, Namrung, and Samagaun often offer washing for NPR 200- 400 per item. At higher altitudes, laundry may be limited to hand washing only. So bring a small line clip set and quick-dry clothes; some lodges allow overnight laundry, though it may take some time for drying.

Can people with asthma do the trek?

Yes, many people who were suffering from asthmawith medical approval and access to inhalers, successfully trekked Manaslu. It's essential to bring extra medication and consult with a doctor before the trek. Use daily preventive inhalers, rest during exertion, and follow your acclimatization schedule.

Is plastic banned on the Manaslu Circuit?

Largely yes, plastic bags, bottles, and packaging are totally banned. Many villages and conservation areas follow "pack-in, pack out" policies. Some teahouses charge extra for bottled water or request trekkers leave empty wrappers behind. Carry a reusable bottle and bag to store wrappers for proper disposal later.

Do they offer oxygen during emergencies?

Not typically, there is no oxygen available in most teahouses. In high-altitude emergencies, evacuation is done through a helicopter from Samdo or Bhimtang. Your travel insurance must include emergency rescue and airlift, which is vital for altitude safety.

Are there side trips to the glacier?

Yes, short hikes to Pungyen Glacier and Glacier Gompa near Samagaun and Samdo take 2-4 hours round trip. These side trips offer close-up views of ice cliffs and glacial lakes. Guides can help you plan excursions depending on the weather and altitude sickness.

Is tipping common on the trail?

Yes, tipping guides and porters is your choice and appreciated. A typical tip is 10 -15% of the total trek cost divided between the guide and porter. This supports their income, especially as Manaslu is less commercial. Most trekkers tip individually at the end, depending on the service and shared journey.

What's the chance of seeing a solar eclipse or meteor showers?

The chance is rare, although the clear skies in high mountains make the trek a great base for viewing the eclipse and meteor showers. Villages above 3,000 m, like Samagaun or Dharamsala, offer open skies and low light pollution. Bring binoculars, a telescope, check astronomical calendars, and plan your trek according to it.

How do Porters and Guides celebrate Holidays or festivals during the trekking Season?

Most porters and guides celebrate festivals like Dashain, Tihar, and Lhosar on the trail by sharing blessings, food, and music with fellow crew and trekkers. They often carry tika, jamara, or small offerings from home. When possible, they adjust the schedules to return home or celebrate in teahouses, keeping the traditions alive even in remote areas.

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