

# Blue Poppy Tours and Treks

## Trekking in Bhutan



Trekking in Bhutan is unlike anywhere else in the world. Walking along the rolling Himalaya can be hard work at times. It's rarely flat - more a succession of ascents and descents, often steep. But it's certainly worth it for the crystal-clear air, little-frequented paths, flora and fauna, and incomparable views. You will see snow-peaked mountains, alpine meadows, rhododendron forests, crystal mountain lakes, traditional farmhouses and villages.

The staging of our treks is designed to ensure that you don't climb too high too fast, to minimise the risk of altitude sickness. Walking at altitude should always be approached with caution, however. Be aware of how your body is reacting and make sure you keep your guide informed of any concerns. Our treks give details of altitude, distance and average walking time each day - there can be a huge variation between a walker with a slow measured pace who takes the hills gently and a fitness fanatic who aims to get to camp by lunchtime! But either way we will make sure you have someone to walk with you to keep you on the right trail.

On all treks, we will provide one or more experienced guides, professional cooks, porters, horses and yaks (for transporting luggage). You won't need to carry more than a day-pack. Blue Poppy Tours and Treks take every precaution to ensure your safety and comfort while in our care.

## Trekking seasons

The best months for trekking in Bhutan are March to May and September to November. Come in April and May to enjoy the deep reds and oranges of rhododendron blossom or in Autumn for beautifully clear views after the monsoon has passed. Our itineraries indicate which treks can be done in winter - but make sure you are properly prepared with warm clothing and equipment. At any time of year the weather can change from warm or hot days to very cold days especially at high altitudes; and at higher elevations night temperatures drop well below zero.

## Food on trek

All your food will be provided for you and you shouldn't need to carry any extra foodstuffs with you unless you really want to. We employ experienced cooks who can

produce western as well as local style meals. That said, some chocolate bars, biscuits, trail mix or dried fruit are often welcome after a few days away from town.

A good tip is to use a metal water bottle - it can be filled for you after dinner with boiled water which serves a dual purpose - you can use it as a sleeping bag warmer during the night and it then provides chilled potable water during the day!

## Equipment



We will provide all essential equipment (especially tents, foam mattresses, eating utensils and kitchen equipment). However, we recommend that you bring your own sleeping bags. A three to four season bag is advisable for the higher treks and in winter. Two season is fine for lower altitudes.

Thermal underwear is generally appreciated at any time of year and you will also need a down jacket and woollen hat and gloves to wear in camp at very high altitudes. Don't

forget rain gear for the occasional wet (or snowy) day you may encounter. Generally we advise a selection of layered clothing to cope with wide temperature fluctuations. You will probably be walking in T-shirts while the sun is out but need to wrap up quickly when you stop for lunch or for photos at the top of a pass!

A head torch is useful for night time forays between your tent and the dining tent or elsewhere. Don't forget spare bulbs and batteries if you are on a long trek. You should also bring strong, well broken-in hiking boots, a sun hat, and sunglasses (with side protection if you are walking at high altitudes). Don't forget sun block if you will be trekking at altitude - the cool air can be deceptive.

Bring all the film you need as it can be difficult to obtain good quality film in Thimphu. Ditto toiletries! For a more comprehensive list of what to bring see the Lonely Planet on Bhutan - or ask us if you are wondering about what will be necessary for the particular trek you have chosen - we would be happy to help.