

Nepaltur 2001

Langtang trek

Dagsprogram

Oktober

Torsdag den 4.10.

Afrejse fra Århus til Kastrup med DSB og videre til Moskva med Aeroflot

Med tog fra Århus kl. 4.25 med ankomst Kastrup kl. 7.37.

Afgang fra Kastrup Lufthavn kl. 9.45.

Ankomst Moskva kl. 14.20. Afg. Moskva kl. 23.55.

Fredag den 5.10.

Ankomst Kathmandu

Ankomst Kathmandu kl. 13.05.

Veksling af valuta og køb af visum.

Indkvartering på Hotel Yeti. Besøg hos Highlander.

Lørdag den 6.10.

Kathmandu

Diverse indkøb til trekking turen.

Søndag den 7.10.

Kathmandu-Dunche (1200m – 1950 m)

9-10 timer

Bus fra **Gongabu** nord for Kathmandu. En smuk, men meget anstrengende bjergkørsel via **Trisuli Bazaar**. En stor del af turen følger vi Trisuli floden. Kort før **Ramche** (2100 m) begynder Langtang Nationalpark, og man skal vise kvittering for entry permit (650 Rs.)

Overnatning i Dunche.

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The starting place for Langtang treks is Dhunche, 117 km from Kathmandu. Buses to Dhunche leave from the bus terminal north of Kathmandu. The first bus leaves at 7 am, costs Rs 64 and takes all day to reach Dhunche. You can also take a bus to Trisuli Bazaar and walk to Dhunche, but the trail is steep and has nothing to offer except physical exertion. It is better to take a bus all the way to Dhunche and let the bus do all the initial climbing.

It is about a four hour drive from Kathmandu (six hours by local bus) on a rough, deteriorating paved highway that twists and climbs over ridges to the Trisuli valley. Passing Balaju and Nagarjun, the road leaves the Kathmandu Valley at Kakani (2145m), where

there are excellent views of Annapurna 11, Manaslu and Ganesh Himal, and descends into the broad Trisuli valley. The bus usually makes a tea stop at Ranipauwa, the only large village on the route, at km 27. This region is the radish capital of Nepal; you can see huge piles of long, freshly washed radishes (*mula* in Nepali) alongside the road awaiting transport to the markets of Kathmandu.

After a long descent through terraced fields, the road crosses the Tadi Khola at km 60, then climbs onto a plateau and passes fields of mustard, corn and rice planted in bright red soil. There is a police checkpost two km before Trisuli where the police sometimes examine trekking permits. The road then passes an army camp and rolls into Trisuli Bazaar at 548m, 72 km from Kathmandu.

Trisuli is the site of a dam and hydroelectric project built by the Indian Technical Mission. A large bridge dominates the town; most shops are before the bridge, and most restaurants are on the opposite side, near the hydroelectric plant. Hotel facilities are spartan and the restaurants are pretty grim. Try the *Ranjit Lodge* for dal bhat. If you must spend the night here, take a look at the *Pratistha Lodge*, near the power plant, or the *Shakyar Lodge*, near the beginning of the Betrawati road. Otherwi-

se, continue eight km to Betrawati for a slightly better selection of hotels.

The unpaved road to Betrawati and Dhunche is a Nepal army project. It took almost 10 years to build the 105 km road that goes all the way to Somdang (3322m), at the foot of Ganes Himal, where there are lead and zinc mines.

The Dhunche road starts at a petrol station in Trisuli Bazaar just before the bridge and follows the east bank of the Trisuli River. The road passes two bridges carrying massive pipes that feed the hydroelectric project and climbs slightly to **Betrawati** at 620m. Betrawati is at the junction of the Trisuli and the Phalangu Khola, at the foot of a steep ridge that rises towards Langtang and Gosainkund. It's 47 km of steep switchbacks on a wild road to Dhunche; at some points it hangs on to a steep cliff 1000m above the river. The road is subject to continual landslides - especially when it rains - so a bus trip to Dhunche can be an adventure.

At Betrawati the road crosses the Phalangu Khola, then switchbacks at the end of the ridge for 15 km, through Brahman and Chhetri villages, to **Kalikhastan** at 1390m. This is the entrance to Langtang National Park; the police examine trekking permits here. The villages now become more spread out, and as the elevation increases, the intense cultivation of the lowland rice growing country gives way to herding, and small fields of corn, millet and vegetables. The road reaches its high point on the ridge at 1980m, then makes a long contour, with a few ups and downs through oak and rhododendron forests, passing above Ramche at Km 33, and then through Thare at Km 37. The road finally reaches **Dhunche**, the administrative

headquarters of the region, at 1950m, three to four hours drive from Betrawati.

Just before Dhunche is the national park headquarters, where park personnel collect the park fee. There is a small visitor center here, and if you ask, a brochure describing the park may be available. Keep the receipt for the park fee safely with your trekking permit since everyone from here on will want to see this document. Drive 50m further to another barrier, where the police record the vehicle information, and then a few hundred metres more to an army check post - your first chance to show off your newly purchased national park receipt. Formalities completed, you enter Dhunche. The bus stop is in upper Dhunche, where there are several lodges and a camping ground. Dhunche is a picturesque village with narrow streets lined with stone buildings. The main part of Dhunche is below the road, but there are no lodges there; you are better off staying near the bus stop. There is a large army installation in a compound above the road.

The *Hotel Thakali* and the *Langtang View* are the up-market establishments, but there are several less fancy operations nearby. The Langtang National Park administration has prepared a fixed menu and price list and requires lodges throughout the park to follow it, so choose a hotel based on looks and service because the prices are (or should be) the same. The camping charge is a larcenous Rs 50 per tent and Rs 100 for use of a kitchen shelter. A room in a lodge costs only Rs 20, so if you have a tent, save it for the next day or hike 11/2 hours on to Thulo Bharkhu. If you have your own vehicle, it is preferable to drive the few km to Thulo Bharkhu and camp there.

Mandag den 8.10.

Dunche (1950 m) – Syabru (2200 m), 8 km, 6 timer

Lige uden for Dunche grener stien fra vejen og følger **Trisula Khola**, krydser floden og stiger stejlt. Vi forlader nu Gosainkund stien og følger en højderyg til **Bharku** (1850 m)

Lidt efter Bharku forlader vi vejen og stiger op til 2300 m gennem fyrreskov. Her kan ses agarner på klipperne. Efter et par timer når vi en højderyg med udsigt mod Langtang- bjergene. Så dykker vi ned gennem løvskov med

rododendron, *Benthamidia* og andre træer. En gompa ved navn **Brabal** passerer. Snart når vi sherpa- landsbyen **Shyabru** (2200 m), der ligger smukt langs en bakkekam. Her er mange gode lodges. To stier fører herfra op til **Gosainkund**, den ene via **Dursagang til Sing Gompa**, den anden til **Chalang Pati**.

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To go to Langtang, stay on the road and cross a new cement bridge over the Trisuli River, which is much smaller here in its upper reaches. Take a moment to reflect on the power of

Himalayan streams as you pass the remnants of a twisted steel bridge that once spanned the stream. Alongside the first waterfall beyond the bridge is an alternative trail to Sing gumpa - straight up an almost vertical cleft in the rock beside the stream.

The Trisuli flows from Gosainkund, where, according to legend, Shiva released the waters of the holy lakes with his *trisul* (trident). The trail north, up the main valley, was once a major trade route with Tibet and is still used by a fair amount of traffic. The route to Tibet via the border town of Rasuwa and the Tibetan village of Kyirong may eventually be opened for trekking if the present trend of allowing cross-border trekking continues. The upper part of the river is named Bhote Kosi ("river from Tibet"), as are most of the rivers that cross the Himalaya into Nepal. When a Nepali river joins it, the Bhote Kosi assumes the name of its smaller tributary. Thus the larger fork of the Trisuli bears the name Bhote Kosi above Dhunche.

The route to Langtang follows the road up to a ridge at 1800m, then continues for a short distance to the Tamang village of **Thulo Bharkhu**, at 1860m, which has a few rough *bhattis*. About 100m from the village, the road crosses a small stream with some water-driven mills. Leave the road and climb steeply to the schoolhouse, then continue up a stone stairca-

se. The walk eventually becomes a delightful - and occasionally level - hike through pine and rhododendron forests to Dau Danda, a single tea shop in the forest at 1980m. At the Tamang village of **Brabal** (2200m) there is a wooden *bhatti* near the trail. Most of the village and its potato and corn fields are hidden behind a ridge.

After a short climb, the trail reaches a ridge crest at 2300m, where the trek finally enters the Langtang Valley. There are views northward of snow peaks in Tibet, west to Ganesh Himal and east to Naya Kangri, the 5846m peak above Ganja La. A short, steep descent through bamboo forests leads to Syabru at 2100m.

Syabru is a pleasant village of about 70 houses, many with elaborately carved wooden windows, strung out along a ridge. There are numerous lodges at the upper end of the village where the trail enters it. There is no need for me to suggest a place to stay here; a bevy of very aggressive English-speaking Tamang women will accost you as you enter the village to extol the virtues of their establishments. Before you settle in for the night, consider the implications of the sign at the camp site before the village that advertises "no dogs here". There are good places to camp before Syabru and also in corn and millet fields far below the village.

Tirsdag den 9.10.

Syabru (2200 m) – Lama Hotel (2400 m),
10 km, 6-7 timer

Stien mod Langtang går ned gennem terrassemarker til en lille biflod. På den anden side stiger stien først brat, siden går den rundt langs bjergsiden og stejlt ned gennem bambuskrat til *Langtang Khola* (1890 m). Efter et par jordskred findes to varme kilder på venstre side. Vi går nu gennem dejlig eskov med piroler, bulbuler, latterdrosler og andre fugle, og hvor cikaderne larmer i sommertiden. I modsætning til den frodige løvskov på sydsiden af floden er nordsiden solvendt og tør.

Læg mærke til

de bizarre *Arisaema*-blomster som hører til Arum-familien. De kendes på et hylsterblad omkring blomsterne, der er samlet på en kølle. Både hylsterblad og kølle er hos flere arter forlænget i en grotesk tråd på op til en meters længde. Om efteråret har de røde bær i en kolbe. De vokser især i 2-3000 m's højde.

Den er græsklædt, og der vokser en mængde høje vortemælkstræer. På klipperne ses biboer.

Vi passerer et gammelt jordskred og når en bro over floden. Lidt længere mod nord kommer vi til **Rimche** (2250 m) og **Changdang (Chongong eller Lama Hotel)** (2400 m).

Heromkring findes fin skov med mange af de bizarre *Arisaema*-arter, og på stammerne vokser *Pleione*-orkideer. Grå langur-aber springer rundt i træerne, og med held ser man gulstrubet mår.

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The trail to Langtang descends along the ridge on Syabru's main street, then

drops to the Ghopcha Khola, first through terraced fields, then through forests of oak, maple, alder and finally bamboo. The trail crosses the stream on a stone and cement bridge, then begins a climb across a ridge dotted with a few bhattis. The route descends on a steep, slippery path to the foot of a huge landslide at 1550m, where a trail junction is marked with signs painted on a rock directing you either to Langtang or back to the road at Syabrubesi. Just beyond the slide, the *Landslide Lodge* provides a chance for a short rest before you climb back along the southern banks of the Langtang Khola as the trail very quickly gains elevation.

For the rest of this day and the following morning, there are few settlements, but the forest abounds with birds. There is also a variety of wildlife in these forests: yellow-throated martin, wild boar, langur monkey, red panda and himalayan black bear. The trail climbs to *Bamboo Lodge*, a jungly lodge at 1850m that is not quite as exotic as its name implies. This region specializes in the sale of colourful woolen socks and belts. The ascent continues to a

steel suspension bridge at 2000m; there is a small bhatti on the south (shady) side and the *Hotel Bridge Side* sits on the opposite bank in the sun.

The route crosses to the north bank of the Langtang Khola, then climbs alongside series of waterfalls. The forest is sparser and drier on this side of the river, consisting mainly of scrub oak, as opposed to the damp forest of large pines on the shady southern bank. Climb steeply to a landslide and the *Langtang View & Lodge* at **Rimche**, 2250m. The *Namaste Tibetan Lodge* is a bit higher at 2330m, and the *Tibetan Lodge* is 10 minutes beyond. There is a trail junction that connects to a high route back to Syarpagaon and Syabrubesi; this was the old trail to Langtang before the bridge was built across the Langtang Khola. You have now finished most of the day's climbing; descend gently to Changtang, popularly known as **Lama Hotel**, at 2380m. There are at least five lodges here, including the *Lama Hotel* itself, and a few camping spots. The next accommodation is about 1½ hours beyond at *Riverside Lodge*.

Onsdag den 10.10.

Lama Hotel (2400 m) – Langtang (3500 m), 10 km, 6 timer

Efter ca. 2 timer når vi til **Gihora Tabela** (»Hestalden«) (3000 m). Her kommer man ud i en bred, åben dal med lav skov. Her ligger en militærlejr. På klipperne ses ofte Himalaya-tahr (en bjergged). Senere passeres et par bifloder og en gompa, inden man kommer til **Langtang** (3500 m), der er en stor samling stenhuse. Her findes nationalparkens hovedkvarter.

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The day starts with a gentle climb, but it soon becomes steeper, climbing high above the Langtang Khola. In places it is so steep that the trail is on logs anchored to the valley wall. tantalising glimpses of Langtang Lirung (7246m) appear through the trees. At **Gumnachok** is the *Riverside Lodge*, on the banks of the river; there is another *Riverside Lodge* in a clearing known as Chhunama, 15 minutes beyond. The trail crosses a stream on a log bridge, then climbs through meadows to **Ghora Tabela** at 3000m. Once a Tibetan resettlement project,

this is now a Nepal army and national park post and has no permanent inhabitants.

The national park lodge is operated on contract and is now named *Lovely Lodge*. There is another police check post where they check, yet again, to be sure that you paid the national park entrance fee. If you somehow slipped past the station at Dhunche, they will collect the fee - and possibly a fine - here. The trail ascends gradually, as the valley becomes wider and wider, past yak pastures, *Thangshyap Lodge*, some *mani* stones and scattered Tamang villages to the *Langtang Gompa Hotel*. You can see the village gompa just above the hotel; if you want to visit the temple, ask the hotel owner for information and assistance. The trail descends into a valley to cross a stream and climbs past several water-driven mills and prayer wheels to the large settlement of **Langtang** at 3500m.

This village is the headquarters for Langtang National Park; the park buildings are those with green metal roofs below the village. The best lodge is the *Village View Lodge* at the entrance to the town; most other lodges in Langtang are rooms in private homes, which are heated and scented by yak-dung fires. The

park administration allows an increase in prices at Langtang village and above, so everything suddenly becomes more costly. The houses of Langtang and the neighbouring communities have Tibetan-style flat roofs and are surrounded by stone walls enclosing fields of buckwheat, potatoes, wheat, turnips and barley. The villagers keep herds of yaks and cattle here and in pastures above the village.

It is easy to go beyond Langtang, but not a good idea from the point of view of acclimatization.

Torsdag den 11.10.

Langtang (3500 m) - Kyanjin Gompa (3800 m), 6 km, 3-4 timer

Fra Langtang stiger vi op gennem dalen, forbi adskillige rækker mani-sten med lamaistiske inskriptioner. Der er en storslået udsigt mod bjergene. Lammegribbe suser forbi på deres søgen efter knogler. Vi krydser et par bifloder, inden vi kommer til **Kyanjin** (3800 m). Her findes en gompa og et osteri. Mælken kommer fra talrige yakokser, som græsser her. For nylig er opført en militærlejr. Soldaterne bl.a. skal beskytte moskushjortene mod krybskytter.

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The trail winds through the village and climbs onto a ridge dominated by a large, square *chorten* and a long row of mani walls. It then

climbs gradually past the small village of Muna to Singdum, where there is a small lodge. Continuing through yak pastures as the valley becomes broader, the path crosses a wooden cantilever bridge, then climbs a moraine where you can finally see Kyanjin gompa. It is a short descent to lodges, a cheese factory and an almost defunct gompa. The Swiss Association for Technical Assistance started the cheese factory in 1955. It now produces about 7000 kg of cheese annually, all of it hauled by porters to the dairy in Kathmandu. It is easy to reach Kyanjin gompa, elevation 3800m, before lunch, allowing time to acclimatise and explore the surroundings. The best place in town is the *Hotel Yala Peak*. The National Park Lodge, with its fancy solar heating, has been leased by a local person and has gone to seed - probably because of the park's price controls.

Trekkers have fallen ill, and some have died, in this region because of altitude problems. Don't go beyond Langtang village if you have come from Lama Hotel, and descend immediately if you suffer a severe headache or vomiting.

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Fredag den 12.10.

Hviledag i Kyangjin Gompa

I den øvre Langtang-dal kan man foretage forskellige vandring. Nord for gompaaen går en sidedal op mod *Langtang Lirung* (7245 m) og *Kimshung* (6745 m), hvorfra store gletschere glider ned. I disse bjerge kan man være heldig at se sneleopard.

Fortsætter man fra Kyangjin mod øst, passerer man store morænetunger bestående af større og mindre sten. Her holder pibeharer til. Ved floden kan den store vadefugl ibisnæb ses. Den findes kun i højalpene vandløb i Centralasien. Ligger der sne, ser man måske spor af kravebjørn. Flere stejle stier fører op til **Tsergo Ri** (4984 m) med en storslået udsigt. I bunden af dalen ligger **Langshisa** (4100 m) ikke langt fra den store *Langtang-gletscher*. Man er

Langtangdalens opdagelse

Læg mærke til en stor sten med røde pletter ved **Langshisa**. Det betyder »den døde tyr«. Legenden fortæller om dalens opdagelse, at en mand ville slagte en tyr (*lang*). Den lugtede lunt og stak af med en ko. Ejeren forfulgte dyrene, men mistede koen. Tyren fortsatte over i en anden dal, som var meget frodig. (*Langtang* betyder »fuld tyr« - altså af græs). Så døde tyren pludselig (»shisa«). Manden tog dens skind af og spredte det ud over en sten for at tørre det. Da han fjernede huden, var stenen plettet af blod, og det er den stadig.

her kun få kilometer fra den tibetanske grænse.

Lonely Planet, side 271: Langtang Valley

Spend the first day hiking up the moraine north of Kyanjin gumpa to an elevation of 4300m or more. From the moraine, there is a spectacular view of Langtang Lirung and the foot of one of its major glaciers.

There are two good viewpoints in the area that you can climb. The peak to the north of Kyanjin gumpa is Kyanjin Ri (4773m) about a two hour climb. Do not head directly up the ridge behind the gumpa; follow the indistinct trail that starts on the opposite side of a stream beyond the national park lodge. The views are superb.

A longer excursion is to Tsergo Ri ("Tserko" on the German map), at 4984m, a four hour climb from Kyanjin gumpa. Both of these peaks

are visible from Kyanjin gumpa and prayer flags mark their tops.

There are also two possible climbing projects: 5500m Yala Peak (not to be confused with Yala Kharka on Tsergo Ri), and 5749m Tsergo Peak (which is different from Tsergo Ri). Both are two-day expeditions that involve glacier climbing and a high camp on a saddle above the trail near Nubama Dhang.

It's also worthwhile taking an extra day or two to continue further up the Langtang Valley to **Langshisha Kharka** for views of Langshisha Ri (6310m), Gang Chhenpo (6388m), Urkeinmang (6151m), and Penthang Karpo Ri (6830m). There are no facilities beyond Kyanjin gumpa, but you can make a day trip and return to Kyanjin gumpa for the night. If you have a tent and food, you can camp at Langshisha Kharka at 4080m or another of the summer pastures high in the valley.

Lørdag den 13.10.

Kyangjin Gumpa (3800 m) - Lama Hotel (2400 m), 16 km, 7-8 timer

Samme vej tilbage til Lama Hotel, men denne gang nedad, så derfor springer vi Langtang over.

Søndag den 14.10.

Lama Hotel (2400 m) - Syabru (2200 m), 10 km, 7 timer

Samme strækning som tirsdag den 9., men i modsat retning.

Mandag den 15.10.

Syabru (2200 m) - Shin Gomba (3350m), 10 km, 5-6 timer

I dag begynder vi vores vandring mod Gosainkund søerne. Syd for Syabru vælger vi den vestlige sti over **Dursagang** til **Shin Gumpa** (Chandan Bari). (Den østlige går til Chalang Pati). I Shin Gumpa findes en gumpa og et osteri. Mælken fås fra yakokser, der om sommeren græsser her. Der er startet et træplantningsprogram for at få skoven tilbage.

Lonely Planet, side 280

There are at least three routes from **Syabru** to Gosainkund. Two of these bypass **Sing gom-**

Vidste du,

hvorfor vandbøflen har så lidt hår? I gamle dage var vandbøflen og yakoksen gode venner. De holdt begge meget af salt, som fandtes ret sparsomt. Yakoksen tilbød at gå op i Tibet for at lede efter salt, men først spurgte den vandbøflen, om den ikke kunne låne noget af dens pels, så den kunne holde varmen oppe i Tibets kulde. Det gik vandbøflen villigt med til. Yakoksen forsvandt, men er den dag i dag ikke vendt tilbage. Derfor holder vandbøflen hovedet højt og kigger op mod bjergene for at se, hvornår dens ven vender tilbage med saltet og den lånte pels.

pa and head directly to two tea shops at Chalang Pati. The route described here is a more circuitous trail via Sing gumpa. This trail is easier to follow and breaks the climb into more manageable segments.

The direct route from Chalang Pati to Syabru is a good choice if you are coming down from Gosainkund because the trail is easy to see from above, but it's a bad choice if you are headed uphill because it's not an obvious route. A guide who knows the way will be very helpful, perhaps essential, if you plan to climb

up this route, otherwise you will probably follow a lot of useless yak trails.

Once you evade the pushy Syabru hoteliers, climb past the gumpa, school and army post, and switchback up the steep hill above the village. There are a few houses and potato fields, but always take the upper, steep trail and you will eventually find yourself at two pleasant tea shops in **Dursagang** at 2550m. The trail continues less steeply, now mostly in forests, past an old chorten to the top of the ridge and two shoddy tea shops at 3000m.

This is also a trail junction; the right-hand trail leads downhill to Brabal and the Dhunche road, and the left trail is a short cut to Chalang Pati. The Sing gumpa trail climbs, then cuts

across the ridge top, staying fairly level in forests as it crosses the head of a valley. Take the uphill trail at each junction and cross another forested ridge. There is a view of Dhunche far below in the valley. The trail continues across the head of a second valley, then reaches a final ridge at 3260m. Sing gumpa is about 100m along the trail to the left.

Sing gumpa is the main attraction at Chandan Bari, elevation 3250m, which also has several lodges and a small cheese factory. The gumpa, which houses a statue of the Green Tara, is not well cared for; the caretaker will unlock it for you for a small fee. The hillside near Chandan Bari is bare and scorched through a combination of logging, fire and wind storms.

Tirsdag den 16.10.

Shin Gomba (3350m) – Lauribina (3900 m), 5 km, 3-4 timer

For at komme til **Gosainkund** går vi mod øst langs højderyggen sydside gennem rododendronskov og over højderyggen til **Chalang Pati** (3650 m). Her går en sti nordpå til Shyabru. På nordsiden fortsætter vi til **Lauribina** (3900 m). Vandposter findes med mellemrum langs ruten, der har en flot udsigt mod nord. Man passerer en chautara (hvileplads), og efter nogen tid krydses over til sydsiden af højderyggen.

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The trail climbs steeply up the ridge, at several points on top of the ridge itself. The ridge is a transition zone between rich, moist mountain forests on the northern slopes and dry scrub vegetation on the slopes that face south. The

trail crosses behind the ridge and stays in deep forests for a while, then emerges onto a saddle at **Chalang Pati** (3380m), where the *Chalang Pati Hotel* offers a welcome cup of tea. When you start walking again, you will see a sign in Nepali. It says that you are now entering the Gosainkund protected area, where the killing of animals, lighting of wood fires and grazing of goats are prohibited.

As the trail ascends, there are outstanding views across Langtang Valley to Langtang Lirung. There are a few goths along the way to the tea shops at Laurebina, elevation 3930m, known locally as **Laurebina Yak**. There are three lodges here; one advertises "astounding mountain views" as you eat "breakfast on top of the world". The views are truly magnificent - you can see the Annapumas, Manaslu (8156m), Ganesh Himal (7406m), some unnamed peaks in Tibet and finally Langtang Lirung.

Onsdag den 17.10.

Lauribina (3900 m) – Gosain Kunda (4400 m), 5 km, 4-5 timer

Stien bliver nu meget vanskelig, og om foråret må man ofte vende om pga. sne. Vi er nu nær **Gosainkundsøerne** (4400 m). Her er et lille Shiva-termpel og adskillige hoteller. I monsun-tiden er dette område én stor blomstereng. Det regner meget og kan være miserabelt, men indimellem dukker bjergene frem mellem skyerne, og fuglene synger.

Lonely Planet, side 281

The trail ascends, now in alpine country, up the ridge to a pair of small stone pillars that say "Welcome to Gosainkund" - but you still have a lot more climbing to do. Continue to the ridge at 4100m and climb further for a view of the first of the lakes, **Saraswati Kund**, in a valley several hundred metres below. The trail leaves the ridge and follows a trail high above the Trisuli valley. This is not a trail for acrophobics; fortunately it is on the sunny side of the bill, so the snow melts quickly. The trail is spooky and

dangerous if it is snow-covered. Indeed, if there has been a lot of snow, it may not be possible to cross into Gosainkund. People have perished floundering in the deep snow in this region, so return to Dhunche if conditions are not good.

After the trail crosses a spur, the second lake in the chain, **Bhairay Kund**, comes into view. The trail climbs gently but continuously to a ridge and drops about 20m to the third and largest lake, **Gosainkund**, at an elevation of 4380m. There are two small tea shops, a shrine and several small stone shelters for pilgrims on the north-western side of the lake. Hundreds of people come here to worship and bathe in

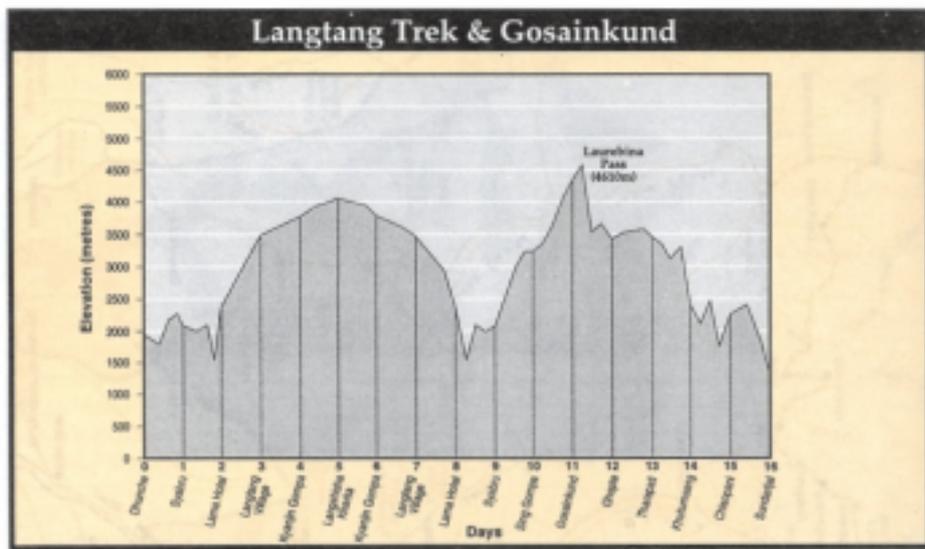
Shivas tørst

Gosainkund-søerne er hellige for hinduerne, og hver fuldmåne i juli-august drager tusinder af pilgrimme op for at et rituelt bad i søerne. En legende fortæller om søernes opståen: lavere guder ville finde udødelighedens vand, og da de rodede havets vande op, steg en gift, *kalkut*, til overfladen. **Shiva** drak det forgiftede vand, for at det ikke skulle skade de andre guder. Det gav ham feber og tørst, og hans hals blev blåfarvet. Han drog derfor op i sneen i bjergene og slyngede sin trefork mod klippen. Hvor den ramte, sprang kilder frem og skabte Gosainkund-søerne. Shiva lagde sig ved bredden og drak.

Nede i søen findes en oval klippe. Pilgrimmene ser den som Shiva, der hviler på et leje af slanger. En mindre sten på den store sten er hans *fangam*. Trefork hedder *trisul* på hindi, og floden, som løber ned fra søerne og videre mod syd, kaldes *Trisuli Khola*.

the lake during the full-moon festival each August.

Gosainkund lake has a black rock in the middle, said to be the head of Shiva. There is also a legend about a white rock under the water that is the remnant of an ancient shrine of Shiva. According to legend, Shiva himself created this high-altitude lake when he pierced a glacier with his trident to obtain water to quench his thirst after consuming some poison. It is also said that the water from this lake disappears underground via a subterranean channel and surfaces in Kumbeshwar pool, next to the five-storey Shiva Temple in Patan, more than 60 km away.



Torsdag den 18.10.

Gosain Kunda (4400 m) - Lauribina La (4609 m) - Ghopte (3450 m), 10 km, 8 timer

Fra søerne går stien over et pas **Laribina La** (4609 m) og videre mod sydøst langs nordsiden af en dal. Ved foden af passet ligger **Phedi** (3700 m). Vi stiger op til nogle gothæ (stenhytter) i 4000 m's højde og derpå ned ad en bakkekam med et vandfald på venstre side. Det er svært terræn med skred og vandløb, der skal krydses. Efter nogen tid når vi **Ghopte** (3450 m).

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The trail passes the northern side of Gosainkund lake and climbs further through rugged country towards Laurebina Pass. The trail is rough and crosses moraines, but it is well marked with rock cairns. Passing three more small lakes, the trail finally reaches the pass at 4610m. A small hillock above the trail offers good views in both directions.

From the pass, the trail descends alongside a stream through alpine country to a single hut at 4100m. Here, at **Bhera Goth**, there is a choice of trails. The upper trail is a new direct route to Tharepati. It is very dangerous when there is any snow at all on the trail, and there is no accommodation or food between here and Tharepati. Get advice from other trekkers or

Fredag den 19.10.

Ghopte (3450 m) - Melamchi Gaon (2530 m), 8 km, 6 timer

Der er nu skovklædt igen. Vi krydser et lille vandløb og begynder opstigningen mod **Tharepati** (3500 m). Her deler stien sig, og man kan vælge at gå østpå mod **Melamchi Gaon** (Melamchi Ghyang) eller sydpå til **Gul Bhanjyang**. Vi går mod øst. Stien går stejlt ned gennem smuk skov af eg, løn, ædelgran og skarntydegran, indtil vi når en lysning med gothæ. Vi går mod højre ned til et vandløb og over en bro. Kort efter kommer vi op til **Melamchi Gaon** (2530 m), den nordligste beboelse i denne dal. Også her bor sherpaer, og der findes en storgompa. Landsbyen har elektricitet.

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Descending from the ridge at Ghopte, the trail continues up ravines and across the boulders of old moraines below the wreckage of a plane

from the man who lives at Bhera Goth before you take this trail. The lower, safer trail descends along the middle of the valley to Phedi (3500m), which comprises two funky tea shops (the *Taj Mel* is one) by a stream and a wooden bridge.

Across the valley, you can see a ridge with a steep trail across its face at an angle of almost 45°. Yes, this is where you are going. The route continues across the head of the valley on an extremely rough trail, across moraines and past two goths that have minimal hotel facilities - just tea and Pepsi - to the bottom of the 160m climb to the ridge. The ascent is just as steep as it looks, but it is not as exposed (and therefore not as frightening) as it looked from across the valley; see the boxed aside.

From the top of this infamous ridge, the trail descends through forests, climbing in and out of ravines across the head of the valley. Giant cliffs tower far above, forming the top of the Thare Danda. On one of the ridges there are some prayer flags; just beyond these flags is **Ghopte** at 3430m. There are two tea shops and a cave that offers some shelter. This is a long and rough day of trekking. The lodges of Tharepati are visible on the far ridge; at night you can see the lights of Trisuli Bazaar far below and the glow of Kathmandu to the south-west.

that crashed in 1992, then makes a final ascent to **Tharepati**, on the ridge at 3490m. There are several lodges below the ridge, and two more on the ridge itself. Take a moment to climb the hill to the east of the ridge for views of Dorje Lakpa, Shisha Pangma and peaks all the way to Khumbu. Here, the trail joins the Helambu circuit. You can travel for two hours downhill to Molemchigaon and on to Tarke Gyang, or go directly down the ridge to Kathmandu via Pati Bhanjyang.

Tharepati consists of a few goths and hotels at 3490m. The very prettily situated *Himalaya Lodge* is on the Kluaturnsang side of the pass. The *Sumche Lodge* is just below the pass while the *Top Lodge* is right at the top. It can get very chilly here at night.

Turn east from the northern end of the settlement and descend steeply down a ravine. The vegetation changes to large firs, then to oaks and rhododendrons, as you rapidly lose all the altitude you gained during the last two

days. Crossing a stream on a suspension bridge, the trail makes a short final climb to reach the prosperous Sherpa village of **Malemchigaon** at 2530m.

The Sherpas of Helambu are very different from their cousins in Solu Khumbu. Instead of the Tibetan-style black dress and colourful apron, the Sherpa women of Helambu wear a dress of red printed cotton. Their language is also quite distinct from the Sherpa language of Solu Khumbu. There are grammatical differences and, in addition, Helambu Sherpas speak much more rapidly than other Sherpas. Helambu women have a reputation for being very beautiful, and many Helambu Sherpa girls were once employed in aristocratic Rana households in Kathmandu during the Rana re-

gime. Many of their benefactors gave gifts of land to these girls, so many Helambu families now own large tracts of farmland in the river valley far below.

Malemchigaon has a very glossy gumpa with a line of prayer flags at the front and brightly painted walls and statues. If it's locked up, enquire at one of the nearby lodges about the key. You can stay at the *Tashi Dhalek Lodge* right by the gumpa, the *Sun Lodge* or the *Green View Lodge* on the Tharepati side of the village, or the comfortable-looking *Yangrima Lodge* overlooking the village from the top end. Electricity supply lines snake down the hill from Malemchigaon, connecting it with Tarke Gyang up the other side of the valley.

Lørdag den 20.10.

Melamchi Gaon (2530 m) – Tarke Ghyang (2600 m), 5 km, 4 timer

Stien fortsætter mod sydøst. Vi passerer en chorten, og efter en times tid gennem en delvis fældet skov krydser vi *Melamchi Khola* (1890 m) ad en stor bro. Her vokser skov af nepalesisk el, og på klipper i nærheden kan ses store vilde biboer.

Stejl opstigning mod **Tarke Ghyang** (2600 m) gennem agerland. Navnet betyder »De 100 Hestes Tempel«. Det skyldes, at grundlæggeren af det første tempel her stoppede en pestepidemi i Kathmandudalen. Han blev først belønnet af kongen med 100 heste, men byttede dem siden for området her. Beboerne er også sherpaer. De sælger mange ting, bl.a. »antikviteter«, som ser gamle ud, fordi de er sværtet over bål!

Lonely Planet, side 276

From Malemchigaon, the trail continues to descend to the *River Side Lodge* and the *Malemchi Khola*, which is crossed on a sturdy suspension bridge at 1890m. Once across the river, the trail immediately begins the ascent towards Tarke Gyang. Sometimes hoteliers from Tarke Gyang come all the way down to the river to try to induce you to patronise their establishments. It is a long climb to this picturesque village on a shelf high above the river at 2600m.

Tarke Gyang is the largest village in Helambu and the destination for most trekkers in

this region. The stone houses are close together with narrow alleyways separating them. Inside, the homes are large, clean and often elaborately furnished with elegant brassware and traditional Tibetan carpets on highly polished wooden floors. The gumpa has a huge brass prayer wheel.

The people of Helambu do a lot of trading in India during the winter. Many of the people are quite well-to-do, and own cultivated fields in the lower Malemchi Khola valley. A special racket among the people of Helambu is the sale of antiques, usually manufactured in Kathmandu and aged over smoky fires in the homes of Tarke Gyang. Beware of any such bargain here. It is illegal to export any item over 100 years old from Nepal, so you would do better to purchase well-made handicrafts in Kathmandu or Patan, rather than try to beat the system by purchasing a fake antique in the hills.

The *Mount View Hotel* is on the Malemchigaon edge of the village. Right by the village's large gumpa is the *Lama Lodge*, while the *Tara Lodge* and the *Helambu Lodge* are further back in the village. At the far side of the village the trail crosses a stream past a water-driven prayer wheel and then a long mani wall beside the entrance to the rambling *Tarkegyang Guest House*. Trekking groups often camp in the garden here.

Søndag den 21.10.

Hviledag i Tarke Ghyang

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Tarke Gyang is a good place to take a rest day, and there's the option of making a half day climb to the peak (3771 m) directly north of the

village. From the chorten on the summit there are superb views of the mountains to the north. This ascent is the first part of the route to the Ganja La pass.

From Tarke Gyang, there is a choice of trails back to Kathmandu.

Mandag den 22.10.

Tarke Ghyang (2600 m) – Shermatang (2600 m), 8 km, 3-4 timer

Fra Tarke Ghyang er der flere muligheder for at komme sydpå. Vi går forbi en gompa og fortsætter langs en højderyg til **Ghyangyul** (2500 m) og **Shermatang** (2600 m).

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From Tarke Gyang the trail leaves the village near the big guesthouse and follows the electricity supply line around the hillside to Parachin. The trail makes a sweep around the wide valley end between Parachin and the pretty village of **Gangjwal** at around 2500m. At the end of the village the *Dolma Lodge* sells cold beer and soft drinks and from its position on the edge of the ridge has views right across to Sermathang.

The trail drops down from the edge of the ridge but then continues at around the same altitude along the side of the ridge, crossing a number of streams and waterfalls and picking its way over the debris from a huge landslide. Finally it passes a gompa at the edge of the large village of **Sermathang** (2620m). There is a Langtang National Park office in the village where you must pay the park entrance fee if you are coming from the opposite direction.

Sermathang has a number of places to stay, including *the Mountain View Lodge*, *the Tara Lodge* and the very comfortable looking *Yangri Lodge* and *Hotel Snowfall*. If you are staying at lodges you might want to make a short day of it and stop here as there are not so many accommodation possibilities further down the ridge before Malemchi.

Tirsdag den 23.10.

Shermatang (2600 m) – Melamchi Pul (890) – Kathmandu (bus), 9 km, 5-6 timers trek + 5 timers buskørsel

Vi fortsætter videre ned i dalen til **Kakani** og **Melamchi Pul Bazaar** (850 m). Her er det værd at besøge *The Himalayan Rescue Dog Squad*, hvis indehaver har redningshunde. Han giver gerne oplysninger om området, og hvis man starter sin vandring her, kan man blive registreret hos ham med oplysning om re-turdato etc. Man kan aftale, at hvis man ikke kommer tilbage til tiden, sættes en eftersøgning i gang. Der går bus herfra til Kathmandu via **Banepa**.

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From Sermathang the trail follows the ridge all the way down to Malemchi Pul Bazaar, making a drop of 1790m. After passing a large gompa at the southern end of the village the trail undulates along the west side of the ridge, passing chorten after chorten before dropping down to

Kakani at around 1900m. Don't confuse this Kakani with the one, just south of Tarke Gyang.

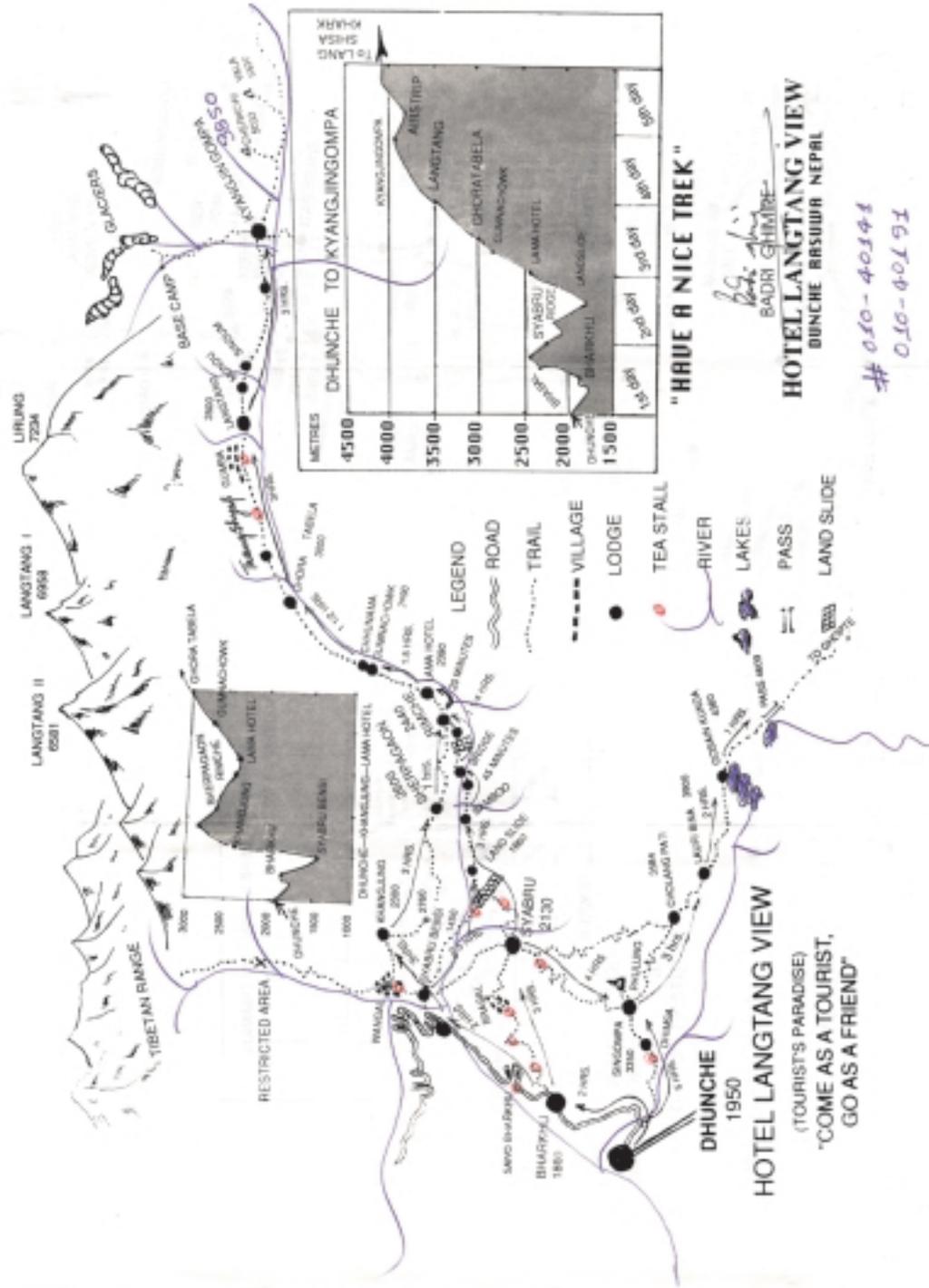
A chorten marks the saddle at the northern end of Kakani and there is a gompa at the top of the hill overlooking the village, but at this point you are in the transition zone from the Buddhist regions to the Hindu lowlands. The fairly primitive-looking *View Lodge* and a couple of tea shops can be found near the chorten.

From Kakani the trail drops steeply past a small village and down to the attractive larger village of **Dubhachaur** at 1500m. A very Australian-looking eucalyptus tree makes a shady lunch stop in the village. The trail descends even more steeply right down the ridge to the junction of the Larke Khola and the Malemchi Khola, where they form the Indrawati River. A suspension bridge takes you over the Larke Khola, just before the junction, and after a short walk along the river bank a larger and grander suspension bridge crosses the Indrawati into **Malemchi Pul Bazaar** at 830m. A

plaque on the bridge proclaims that it was made by John Henderson & Co Ltd, Engineers of Aberdeen, Scotland. The village has a collection of shops and teahouses and numerous lodges including the *Indrawati*, *Helambu*, *Shanti* and the quite luxurious-looking *Lama Lodge*.

Transport (including buses) runs reasonably frequently along the road (known as the Helambu Highway) from Malemchi via Bahuneapati and Sipa Ghat to Panchkal on the Kodari road.





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