

Be a Responsible Traveller

Things to remember

- Dispose of waste responsibly. Do not litter.
- Respect cultures and traditions of both local people as well as other visitors.
- Do not bathe or swim in lakes.
- Be careful when riding yaks or horses.
- Do not stay at high altitudes for extended periods.

High Altitude Sickness

As travellers ascend to altitudes over 2,500 m (8,200 ft), the oxygen in the air starts thinning. Therefore, the higher you go, the slower you should climb.

Generally speaking, if you are above 2,500 m ascend 300m or less per day. If you are above 3,500m ascend 150m or less per day. Take a day's rest every three to four days.

The first signs of high altitude sickness include:



Headache



Tiredness



Dizziness



Loss of appetite



Vomiting



Disturbed sleep

- Rest and avoid exhaustion.
- Ensure an adequate liquid intake.
- Take specific high-altitude sickness medication and/or oxygen.
- If the symptoms persist or get worse, go down immediately.

Source: Jim Duff & Peter Gormly (2001): *First aid and survival in mountain and remote areas*. 7th Edition. Treksafe, Australia, p.101-103.

Disclaimer: The information presented here provides only a brief introduction to altitude sickness. Please refer to other materials for more comprehensive information.

Did You Know?

- Around one million people from several ethnic backgrounds live in the KSL. The Drokpa, Han, Hoi Muslim, and Uighur people are native to KSL China; the Pahadi Hindu, Van Rajji, Johari, and Rang communities live in KSL India; and the Pahadi or Khas Hindu, Humli Khampa, Rang, and Lama communities in KSL Nepal.
- Four major rivers in Asia – Indus, Sutlej, Karnali, and Brahmaputra originate from KSL.
- The landscape has both dry and hot regions as well as areas with permanent snow and ice cover.
- The KSL is populated by about 100 different species of mammals, nearly 500 different birds, over 50 kinds of reptiles and amphibians. Rare and endangered species like the snow leopard, the Himalayan griffon vulture, the Himalayan musk deer, the Himalayan black bear, and the Himalayan brown bear live here.
- Several medicinal plants grow in the high mountains of the KSL. The 'caterpillar fungus' (*yartsagumba*) is one of these plants.
- While in the KSL, visitors can go on a pilgrimage or participate in culture and heritage treks. They may also embark on glacier expeditions or engage in some angling, paragliding, and parasailing, or canoeing and river rafting.



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The Kailash Sacred Landscape Illustrated Map



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Transcending borders of China, India and Nepal for pilgrimage and tourism

To the overage person, Mt. Kailash is a 6,714m high mountain made of black meta-sedimentary rock located in a remote windswept corner of the Tibetan Plateau. To people of Bon, Jain, Hindu, and Buddhist faiths, however, it is an important centre of worship, the axis mundi around which the whole world revolves.

This unusually symmetrical mountain is surrounded on most sides by tough shaped valleys that create a natural circumambulation route, the Kailash kora. The route starts and ends at the settlement of Dorchen (4,670 m) and stretches over 56 kms, with the Droima La pass (5,650 m) being its highest point. Buddhist monasteries, sky burial sites, rocks imprinted with sacred inscriptions, magnificent cliff faces, mountains, and streams lie along the route.

Every year, thousands of pilgrims and trekkers from South Asia, East Asia, and other parts of the world journey to Pulan County in China's Tibet Autonomous Region to visit the Kailash Sacred Landscape (KSL). The landscape transcends borders – contiguous regions in China, India, and Nepal are part of KSL, and brings people from different faiths together.

About the Kailash Sacred Landscape

Located within the remote southwestern portion of the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China, adjacent districts in the far-western region of Nepal, and the northernmost State in northern India, the Kailash Sacred Landscape is spread over an area of about 31,000 km² and represents a diverse, multi-cultural, and fragile landscape. Four major rivers originate from the landscape – Indus, Sutlej, Karnali, and Brahmaputra providing water services to millions of people living downstream.

The Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KSLCDI) is a transboundary collaborative programme between China, India, and Nepal that has evolved through a participatory, iterative process among various local and national research and development institutions within these countries. The programme aims to achieve long-term conservation of ecosystems, habitats, and biodiversity while encouraging sustainable development, enhancing the resilience of communities in the landscape, and safeguarding the cultural linkages between local populations.

About Illustrative Map

The illustrated KSL map has been developed to cartographically represent the uniqueness of the KSL. The map pictorially represents the region's fauna, its mountain, pilgrimage sites, cultural sites and various human settlements and communities that are indigenous to the region. The map is produced by ICIMOD with assistance from Cartoonist & Illustrator, Mr Rohan Chakravarty <http://www.greenhumnour.com/>

Publication References

1. Guidelines for Travelling Responsibly in the Kailash Sacred Landscape (2014) <http://lib.icimod.org/record/29660>
2. Communication Booklet for Yak and Horse Transportation Team in the Kailash Sacred Landscape (2016) <http://lib.icimod.org/record/32574>
3. Folk Gods, Stories from Kailash, Tise, and Kang Rinpoche (2017) <http://lib.icimod.org/record/32800>
4. Shared Sacred Landscapes: Stories from Mount Kailas, Tise & Kang Rinpoche (2017) <http://lib.icimod.org/record/32574>

Freely available to download at <http://lib.icimod.org/record/33725>

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Cultural sites in the Kailash Sacred Landscape

	Mt. Kailash	This 6,714m peak is located in the Gandise range in Tibet (China), close to the borders with both India and Nepal. Doing the arduous 53 km 'kora' or 'parikrama' (circumambulation) of Mt. Kailash is considered an extremely meritorious activity among Buddhists, Bonpos, Hindus, and Jains.
	Lake Manasarovar	This freshwater lake at 4,590m is a highly revered pilgrimage site for Buddhists, Hindus, Bonpos, Jains, and animist communities' resident from all over the world. Known as Mapham Yumtso to the Tibetans.
	Chhiu Gumba	This monastery is located on the northwestern shores of Lake Manasarovar.
	Rakshas Tal	This lake at 4,595m lies west to Lake Manasarovar. Unlike Lake Manasarovar, Rakshas Tal is believed to possess demonic energies. A small non-perennial stream called 'Ganga Chhu' sometimes carries the overflow from Lake Manasarovar to Rakshas Tal.
	Gurla Mandhata	Considered the abode of the goddess 'Menmo Nanyi', this gently sloping 7,694 m peak lies in Pulan county.
	Gaurikund	Gaurikund is a pond located at an altitude of 5,500 m. Its waters are considered holy by Hindus, Buddhists, Bonpos, and Jains.
	Milarepa's Rock	This geometrically shaped rock lies close to Zutulphuk Gumba on the Kailash 'kora' route.
	Trugo Gumba	This monastery is located along the southern shores of Lake Manasarovar.
	Yam Dwaar	The southern face of Mt. Kailash is visible from this small structure on a clear day. Hindus and Buddhists perform rituals here.
	Zutulphuk Gumba	This monastery is located to the south-east of Mt. Kailash. It is associated with Buddhist and Bon mystics.
	Bugyal	'Bugyals' are high-altitude meadows and pastures, often either sacred, or managed under customary institutions by the Shauka tribes.
	Garbyang	This village is rich in architecture and was once the centre of Indo-Tibetan trade. For the past several decades, the village has been sinking towards the Mahakali river bed.
	Haat Kalika Temple	Haat Kalika is a 'shakti-peeth' site, believed to have been established in the 8 th century A.D.
	Jageshwar Temple	This temple is a 'jyotirlinga' site, with a group of 124 large and small stone temples dating from the 9 th to the 13 th centuries AD.
	Nanda Devi	At 7,816m, Nanda Devi is the second highest mountain in India. It is sacred to certain Hindu sects, and hosts the 'Nanda Devi Raj Jal' pilgrimage every 12 years.
	Narayan Ashram	The Ashram, notable for its architecture was established in 1936. It is named after Narayan Swami.
	Ninglasaini Temple	This temple is dedicated to the wrathful aspect of the Mother Goddess Durga. The temple is a site for ritual animal sacrifice. This temple is in Baitadi district of western region in Nepal
	Patal Bhuvaneshwar	This cave complex has several stalactites and stalagmites. These natural formations are revered by Hindus as manifestations of gods and goddesses.
	Adi Kailash	This 5,945m peak, located on the Indo-Nepali border, can be seen as a minor mirror image of Mt. Kailash in Tibet.
	Api Himal	This 7,132m peak is located in Api Nampa Conservation Area of Nepal. The glacial valley at its base is a rich source of the valuable 'caterpillar fungus' (<i>Ophiocordyceps sinensis</i>).
	Chhya Nagajung cave	This cave has been a retreat for Buddhist meditators for centuries.
	Halji Gumba	The Halji Rinchenling Gumba, among the oldest in Nepal, was established in the 11 th century AD in Limi valley, Humla.
	Khaptad Temple	This temple was established by the Hindu ascetic Khaptad Baba in the 1980s. Khaptad Baba was influential in establishing the Khaptad National Park in 1984. Khaptad National Park is in Western Nepal of KSL Nepal.
	Melauli Bhagwati Temple	This temple is located in Baitadi district and is infamous for its associations with the erstwhile 'Dauki tradition', in which young girls were given to the temple as life-long offerings.
	Muchu Gumba	The Tugar Chhyojyong monastery in Humla dates back to the 15 th century. It is associated with the spiritual leader Shiva Lodro Rinpoche.
	Om Parvat	This 6,191m peak is notable for a natural ridge line on its western face which resembles the sacred Hindu symbol for 'Om'.
	Tripura Sundari Temple	Located in Baitadi district of Nepal, the temple is a popular pilgrimage site. It is dedicated to the Goddess Durga.
	Yalbang Gumba	Yalbang Gumba is the largest monastery in Humla. At present, the 2 nd Pema Riksal Rinpoche presides over the monastery.
	Raling Gumba	This temple is located at an altitude of 4000m, at the foot of the sacred mountain Chelmo Kang in Nepal. It is sacred to both Lama Buddhist and Khas Hindu communities in Humla.



KAILASH SACRED LANDSCAPE

Mt. KAILASH (KANGRINPOQÉ)

Not to scale

CHINA

INDIA

NEPAL



- Kailash Sacred Landscape Boundary
- Historical Routes
- Water Bodies
- Towns / Villages
- Protected Areas
- Mountain Peaks
- Passes