Mustang Tiji Festival

Trip information · Nord Extreme Himalaya Pvt. Ltd. · delightful-orange-chimpanzee.tarevirjungleresort.com · Updated 22 November 2026

DURATION	**14 Days**
DIFFICULTY	**Moderate**
MAX ALTITUDE	**3800m**
GROUP SIZE	**17 People**
BEST SEASON	**April–May**
START / END	**Kathmandu / Kathmandu**
PRICE FROM	**USD 3,190 per person**

Trip overview

The Mustang Tiji Festival Trek is a remarkable cultural journey into the ancient Kingdom of Lo in Upper Mustang, combined with the vibrant celebration of the Tiji Festival in Lo Manthang. This trek offers a rare opportunity to witness one of the most sacred and colorful Buddhist festivals in the Himalayas while exploring the dramatic trans-Himalayan landscapes of Nepal.

The Tiji Festival is a three-day ritual-based celebration symbolizing the victory of good over evil, performed with masked dances, chants, and religious ceremonies in the courtyard of Lo Manthang's royal palace. Set against the backdrop of the Tibetan plateau-like desert of Upper Mustang, the festival creates a truly unique spiritual and cultural atmosphere.

The trek also provides stunning views of Himalayan ranges including Dhaulagiri, Nilgiri, and surrounding peaks, contrasting beautifully with the arid cliffs and valleys of Mustang.

This trek is ideal for cultural travelers, photographers, and adventure seekers looking for a rare Himalayan festival experience combined with exploration of one of Nepal's most restricted regions.

Geography and Landscape

The Mustang Tiji Festival Trek takes place in the Upper Mustang region of north-central Nepal within Annapurna Conservation Area. The journey typically begins with a flight or drive to Jomsom, followed by trekking along the Kali Gandaki Valley into the restricted area of Upper Mustang.

The landscape is stark, dramatic, and highly distinctive. It features dry, wind-swept valleys, deep canyons, and colorful eroded cliffs in shades of red, orange, and brown. The region lies in a rain-shadow zone, resulting in a desert-like environment unlike anywhere else in Nepal.

The trekking route passes through traditional villages such as Kagbeni, Chele, Syangboche, Ghami, Tsarang, and finally Lo Manthang, the walled capital of Upper Mustang. These villages are characterized by ancient mud-brick houses, narrow alleys, monasteries, and prayer flags fluttering in the strong Himalayan wind.

Lo Manthang is the cultural heart of the trek and the main venue for the Tiji Festival. During the festival, the royal courtyard becomes a vibrant stage for masked dances, ritual performances, and religious ceremonies performed by monks dressed in elaborate costumes.

The surrounding landscape enhances the experience, with snow-capped peaks visible in the distance and vast barren valleys stretching toward the Tibetan plateau.

Climate and Best Time to Trek

The best time to undertake the Mustang Tiji Festival Trek is spring (April–May), as the Tiji Festival is usually celebrated in Lo Manthang during this period.

Upper Mustang lies in a rain-shadow region, meaning it remains dry even during the monsoon season. However, spring offers the most comfortable weather conditions, with mild temperatures, clear skies, and excellent visibility.

Daytime temperatures are generally pleasant, while nights can be cold due to high altitude. The dry climate ensures stable trekking conditions throughout the route.

Autumn (September–November) is also suitable for trekking, but it does not coincide with the festival. Winter (December–February) is very cold and windy, making travel difficult and less comfortable.

Overall, spring is the ideal season, especially for those traveling specifically to experience the Tiji Festival.

People and Culture

Upper Mustang is home to Tibetan-influenced communities whose culture is deeply rooted in Buddhism and ancient Himalayan traditions. The region was historically part of the Kingdom of Lo, and many cultural practices remain unchanged for centuries.

The Tiji Festival is the most important cultural event in the region, symbolizing the triumph of Dorje Jono over evil forces. Monks perform sacred masked dances, prayers, and rituals in Lo Manthang, drawing both locals and limited international visitors.

Villages such as Lo Manthang, Tsarang, and Ghami preserve traditional lifestyles, with farming, animal husbandry, and monastic life forming the backbone of the community. Monasteries, chortens, and prayer walls are central to daily life.

The Mustang Tiji Festival Trek offers a rare and powerful cultural experience, combining ancient traditions, dramatic landscapes, and spiritual celebration, making it one of the most unique trekking experiences in Nepal.

Highlights

- Experience the colorful Tiji Festival, one of the most authentic Tibetan Buddhist festivals.
- Explore the remote and culturally preserved region of Mustang.
- Trek through dramatic desert landscapes and Himalayan scenery.
- Gain insight into ancient Tibetan Buddhist traditions and spirituality.
- Enjoy a rewarding blend of trekking, culture, and adventure.

Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 : Arrival in Kathmandu (1,400m)

Altitude: 1,400m

Stay: Hotel · Visit: Nepal · Meals: Dinner

Activity Duration: Airport transfer 30–45 minutes

Welcome to Nepal! Upon arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport, our representative will meet and transfer you to your hotel. After check-in, your guide will assist with permit arrangements, gear inspection, and a detailed trek briefing.

You may spend the rest of the day exploring Thamel or preparing for your journey into the ancient Kingdom of Mustang.

Day 2 : Trek Permit and Preparation Day in Kathmandu (1,400m)

Altitude: 1,400m – 1,400m

Stay: Hotel · Visit: Nepal · Meals: Breakfast

Activity Duration: 4–6 hours

Today is reserved for processing the Upper Mustang Restricted Area Permit and Annapurna Conservation Area Permit. Your guide will review the itinerary, cultural etiquette, weather conditions, and festival schedule.

Enjoy free time for sightseeing, shopping, or relaxing before departure.

Day 3 : Flight to Jomsom and Trek to Kagbeni (2,800m)

Altitude: 1,400m – 2,720m – 2,800m

Walk: 3–4 hours · Stay: Tea House · Visit: Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Flight Duration: 20–25 minutes

Take an early morning flight to Jomsom with spectacular views of Annapurna and Dhaulagiri. Begin trekking along the Kali Gandaki River to Kagbeni, a fascinating medieval village and gateway to Upper Mustang.

Explore its narrow alleys, ancient monastery, and traditional Tibetan-style architecture.

Day 4 : Trek from Kagbeni to Chele (3,050m)

Altitude: 2,800m – 3,050m

Walk: 5–6 hours · Stay: Tea House · Visit: Upper Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Follow the dramatic Kali Gandaki Valley through colorful cliffs, desert landscapes, and ancient cave formations. Pass traditional villages before reaching Chele, perched above a deep canyon with beautiful mountain views.

Day 5 : Trek from Chele to Syangboche (3,800m)

Altitude: 3,050m – 3,800m

Walk: 6–7 hours · Stay: Tea House · Visit: Upper Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Cross several scenic passes, including Taklam La and Dajori La, while enjoying magnificent views of Mustang's rugged terrain. Pass through Samar and sacred cave sites before reaching Syangboche.

This gradual ascent provides excellent acclimatization.

Day 6 : Trek from Syangboche to Ghami (3,520m)

Altitude: 3,800m – 3,520m

Walk: 5–6 hours · Stay: Tea House · Visit: Upper Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Trek through dry valleys, juniper-covered hills, and traditional Mustang villages. Pass ancient

monasteries and one of the longest mani walls in Nepal before arriving in Ghami.

Day 7 : Trek from Ghami to Lo Manthang (3,810m)

Altitude: 3,520m – 3,810m

Walk: 6–7 hours · Stay: Tea House · Visit: Upper Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Continue across vast plateaus and historic trade routes, visiting ancient gompas and traditional settlements along the way. Arrive at Lo Manthang, the legendary walled capital of the former Kingdom of Mustang.

Day 8 : Tiji Festival – Day 1 (3,810m)

Altitude: 3,810m – 3,810m

Stay: Tea House · Visit: Upper Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Activity Duration: Full Day

Witness the opening ceremonies of the Tiji Festival, Mustang's most important cultural and religious event. Monks perform sacred masked dances depicting the victory of good over evil, accompanied by traditional music and rituals.

Day 9 : Tiji Festival – Day 2 (3,810m)

Altitude: 3,810m – 3,810m

Stay: Tea House · Visit: Upper Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Activity Duration: Full Day

Experience the second day of celebrations, featuring elaborate cham dances, colorful costumes, and ancient Buddhist ceremonies performed within the royal square of Lo Manthang.

Day 10 : Tiji Festival – Day 3 (3,810m)

Altitude: 3,810m – 3,810m

Stay: Tea House · Visit: Upper Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Activity Duration: Full Day

Attend the grand finale of the Tiji Festival, where sacred rituals symbolize the banishment of negative forces and the restoration of harmony and prosperity.

This is a unique opportunity to experience one of the Himalayas' most authentic cultural festivals.

Day 11 : Trek from Lo Manthang to Dhakmar (Alternate Route) (3,820m)

Altitude: 3,810m – 4,010m – 3,820m

Walk: 6–7 hours · Stay: Tea House · Visit: Upper Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Begin the return journey via a scenic alternate route through Ghar Gompa, one of Mustang's oldest monasteries associated with Guru Rinpoche. Cross high ridges before descending to the striking red cliffs of Dhakmar.

Day 12 : Trek from Dhakmar to Chhusang (2,980m)

Altitude: 3,820m – 2,980m

Walk: 7–8 hours · Stay: Tea House · Visit: Upper Mustang Region · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Descend through Ghami, Geling, and dramatic canyon landscapes. Pass ancient villages, colorful rock formations, and fertile river valleys before reaching Chhusang.

Day 13 : Drive to Jomsom and Fly to Kathmandu (1,400m)

Altitude: 2,980m – 2,720m – 822m – 1,400m

Stay: Hotel · Visit: Nepal · Meals: Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Drive Duration: 2–3 hours

Flight Duration: 20–25 minutes (Jomsom–Pokhara) + 25 minutes (Pokhara–Kathmandu)

Drive through the Kali Gandaki Valley to Jomsom and take scenic flights via Pokhara back to Kathmandu. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel and enjoy a relaxing evening.

Day 14 : Final Departure or Onward Travel

Visit: Nepal · Meals: Breakfast

According to your international flight schedule, transfer to Tribhuvan International Airport for your departure flight.

We hope you leave Nepal with unforgettable memories of the ancient Kingdom of Mustang, its spectacular landscapes, and the extraordinary Tiji Festival celebration.

Altitude & temperature

Typical daytime / night temperature at each overnight stop in the best travel months. Temperatures can change with the weather.

- Day 1 · Arrival in Kathmandu · 1,400 m · day 30°C / night 20°C
- Day 2 · Trek Permit and Preparation Day in Kathmandu · 1,400 m · day 30°C / night 20°C
- Day 3 · Flight to Jomsom and Trek to Kagbeni · 1,400 m · day 30°C / night 20°C
- Day 4 · Trek from Kagbeni to Chele · 2,800 m · day 23°C / night 11°C
- Day 5 · Trek from Chele to Syangboche · 3,050 m · day 21°C / night 9°C
- Day 6 · Trek from Syangboche to Ghami · 3,800 m · day 18°C / night 5°C
- Day 7 · Trek from Ghami to Lo Manthang · 3,520 m · day 19°C / night 6°C
- Day 8 · Tiji Festival – Day 1 · 3,810 m · day 18°C / night 4°C
- Day 9 · Tiji Festival – Day 2 · 3,810 m · day 18°C / night 4°C
- Day 10 · Tiji Festival – Day 3 · 3,810 m · day 18°C / night 4°C
- Day 11 · Trek from Lo Manthang to Dhakmar · 3,810 m · day 18°C / night 4°C
- Day 12 · Trek from Dhakmar to Chhusang · 3,820 m · day 18°C / night 4°C
- Day 13 · Drive to Jomsom and Fly to Kathmandu · 2,980 m · day 22°C / night 10°C

What’s included

1. Transportations

- Private/tourist vehicles for airport pickup and drop-off in Kathmandu.
- Private/tourist vehicles transfer as per itinerary to access the trailheads.

2. Accommodation & Meals

- 3 Nights 3 star hotel in Kathmandu with bed & breakfast basis.
- 1 Night 3 star hotel in Pokhara with bed & breakfast basis.

- All Meals (breakfast, lunch & dinner with tea & coffee) during the trekking Period.

3. Permits

- Upper Mustang restricted Area permits (Issued by Department of Immigration)
- Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) permits.
- Local Government entry permits.
- Trekkers' Information Management System (TIMS) permits.

4. Guide & Staff

- Professional and experience License holder trekking guide salary & insurance.
- Porter salary, equipments & insurance.
- First aid medical kit for emergency support.

Not included

1. International Flights

- Airfare from your home country to Nepal (Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu).
- Return airfare from Nepal (Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu) to your home country.

2. Visa Fees

- Nepal entry visa fee for entering Nepal (available on arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu, or through a Nepalese embassy).

3. Travel Insurance (Mandatory)

- Comprehensive travel insurance covering high-altitude trekking, emergency medical treatment, helicopter evacuation, trip cancellation, and other unforeseen circumstances.

4. Personal Expenses

- Tips, gifts, and souvenirs for trekking guides and porters.
- Personal trekking equipment and gear.
- Charges for lodge Wi-Fi, hot showers, battery charging, and laundry services.

5. Meals & Beverages

- Lunch and dinner in Kathmandu, Pokhara, and other locations where accommodation is provided in 3-star category hotels.
- Soft drinks, bottled water, alcoholic beverages, and snacks consumed during meals

Dates & prices

- 05 May, 2027 – 18 May, 2027 · USD 3,190 · Available

Best time to visit

Best months: May–June and September–October. Mustang and Dolpo lie in the rain-shadow of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges, so they are one of the few regions you can trek during the summer monsoon. May–June and September–October are ideal; winters are harsh and many lodges close.

What to bring — packing checklist

Clothing

- [ ] Moisture-wicking base layers (top and bottom)
- [ ] Fleece or light insulated mid-layer
- [ ] Down jacket (–10 °C rated for high trails)
- [ ] Waterproof, breathable shell jacket and trousers
- [ ] 2–3 trekking shirts and 2 pairs of trekking trousers
- [ ] Warm hat, sun hat or cap and buff
- [ ] Light liner gloves and warm insulated gloves
- [ ] Underwear and sports bras

Footwear

- [ ] Broken-in waterproof trekking boots with ankle support
- [ ] Camp shoes or sandals for teahouse evenings
- [ ] Hiking socks (4–5 pairs) and warm wool socks for nights

Equipment

- [ ] Daypack 30–35 L with rain cover
- [ ] Sleeping bag rated to –10 °C (we can provide one)
- [ ] Trekking poles
- [ ] Sunglasses with UV protection
- [ ] Duffel bag for the porter (provided by Nord Extreme)

Health & personal

- [ ] Personal medication and a small first-aid kit
- [ ] Altitude medicine (Diamox) after consulting your doctor
- [ ] Water bottles or a 2–3 L hydration bladder, purification tablets or filter
- [ ] Sunscreen SPF 50, lip balm with SPF
- [ ] Hand sanitiser, wet wipes, quick-dry towel
- [ ] Headlamp with spare batteries, power bank

Documents & money

- [ ] Passport valid for 6+ months, plus copies
- [ ] Travel insurance policy (covering helicopter evacuation)
- [ ] 4 passport photos for permits
- [ ] Cash in USD / Nepali rupees for tips, snacks and extras
- [ ] Credit or debit card

Down jackets and sleeping bags can also be rented in Kathmandu.

Essential information

Accommodation

Accommodation is provided in traditional teahouses, lodges, and guesthouses throughout the trekking route.

Villages such as Kagbeni, Chele, Syangboche, Ghami, Tsarang, and Lo Manthang offer comfortable lodge accommodations with twin-sharing rooms and basic modern amenities.

Facilities are simple yet comfortable, reflecting the authentic lifestyle and culture of the Mustang region.

Meals

A full-board meal plan (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner) is provided throughout the trek.

Meals feature a variety of Nepali, Tibetan, and local Mustang cuisine designed to meet the nutritional requirements of trekkers.

Typical menu options include:

- Traditional Dal Bhat set meals
- Tibetan bread and chapati
- Noodles, pasta, and fried rice
- Potatoes, vegetables, and soups
- Eggs, pancakes, and porridge
- Tea, coffee, butter tea, and hot beverages

During the festival period, visitors may also enjoy local ceremonial foods and traditional hospitality.

Difficulty & Physical Requirements

The Mustang Tiji Festival Trek is classified as moderate, making it suitable for trekkers with average fitness and some previous hiking experience.

Daily trekking generally ranges from 5 to 7 hours, following established trails through villages, desert valleys, and mountain landscapes.

No technical climbing is required, and the gradual elevation profile makes the trek accessible to a wide range of travelers.

Permits

Required permits include:

- Upper Mustang Restricted Area Permit
- Annapurna Conservation Area Permit (ACAP)
- TIMS Card (Trekkers' Information Management System)

A licensed trekking guide is mandatory for all Upper Mustang trekking programs.

Best Season

The trek is specifically designed around the annual Tiji Festival, which is usually celebrated during May.

Ideal trekking seasons include:

- Spring (March–May): Festival season, clear skies, and excellent trekking conditions
- Summer (June–August): Suitable due to Mustang's rain-shadow location
- Autumn (September–November): Stable weather and excellent mountain visibility

The Tiji Festival period is considered the most popular and culturally rewarding time to visit Upper Mustang.

Transportation & Access

The journey typically begins with travel from Kathmandu to Pokhara, followed by a scenic flight to Jomsom.

From Jomsom, the trekking route follows the historic Kali Gandaki Valley through Kagbeni and into the restricted Upper Mustang region before reaching Lo Manthang, where the Tiji Festival takes place.

Safety & Acclimatization

The trek reaches elevations of approximately 4,000–4,200 meters and requires gradual acclimatization.

Important safety considerations include:

- Steady altitude gain throughout the trek
- Dry desert climate requiring adequate hydration
- Strong winds common in Mustang valleys
- Protection from sun exposure and dust
- Monitoring for altitude-related symptoms

Professional guides provide support for safety, acclimatization, and festival coordination.

Travel Insurance

Comprehensive travel insurance is highly recommended and should include:

- High-altitude trekking coverage (minimum 5,000m)
- Emergency helicopter evacuation
- Medical treatment and hospitalization
- Accident, cancellation, and trip interruption coverage

Additional information

Guide & Porter Services

A licensed guide is mandatory due to Upper Mustang's restricted area regulations.

Porters are available to carry luggage, allowing trekkers to enjoy the journey comfortably with a light daypack.

Guides also provide detailed insight into the religious significance, history, and cultural traditions associated with the Tiji Festival.

Festival & Cultural Highlights

The Tiji Festival is one of the most important spiritual celebrations in the Himalayas and represents the victory of good over evil according to Tibetan Buddhist beliefs.

Highlights include:

- Sacred masked dances performed by monks
- Traditional Buddhist rituals and ceremonies
- Colorful monastic processions and cultural performances
- Blessing ceremonies conducted by senior lamas
- Ancient traditions preserved for centuries
- Spectacular atmosphere within the walled city of Lo Manthang
- Opportunities to interact with local communities and pilgrims
- Deep insight into Tibetan Buddhist philosophy and culture

Essential Equipment

Recommended trekking gear includes:

- Comfortable trekking boots
- Layered clothing suitable for varying temperatures
- Warm jacket for evenings and higher elevations
- Windproof and waterproof outer layers
- Hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen
- Trekking poles
- Daypack (30–40L)
- Personal first aid kit and medications
- Reusable water bottles and hydration system

Communication & Connectivity

Mobile network coverage is available in many villages, including Lo Manthang, though signal strength may vary.

Wi-Fi services are available in selected lodges and guesthouses for an additional fee, but speeds are generally limited.

Why Choose the Mustang Tiji Festival Trek?

The Mustang Tiji Festival Trek offers one of the most unique cultural journeys in the Himalayas:

- Witness the world-famous Tiji Festival in Lo Manthang
- Experience authentic Tibetan Buddhist traditions and rituals
- Explore the ancient Kingdom of Lo and its rich heritage
- Trek through dramatic trans-Himalayan desert landscapes
- Visit centuries-old monasteries, caves, and historic villages
- Enjoy a rare blend of culture, spirituality, and adventure
- Interact with local Mustang communities during festival celebrations
- Ideal for cultural enthusiasts, photographers, and spiritual travelers
- One of Nepal’s most exclusive restricted-area trekking experiences
- A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to witness a living Himalayan tradition

Frequently asked questions

How difficult is the Mustang Tiji Festival?

The Mustang Tiji Festival is graded Moderate — suitable for most active travellers. Expect 5–7 hours of walking on most days on mountain trails with plenty of ascents and descents. Regular cardio training — hiking, running, cycling or stair climbing — for 6–8 weeks before departure makes the trip far more enjoyable.

What is the best time for the Mustang Tiji Festival?

For the Mustang & Dolpo (rain-shadow) region the best months are May–June and September–October. Mustang and Dolpo lie in the rain-shadow of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges, so they are one of the few regions you can trek during the summer monsoon. May–June and September–October are ideal; winters are harsh and many lodges close.

What permits do I need for the Mustang Tiji Festival?

You need the Annapurna Conservation Area Permit and, for Upper Mustang or Dolpo, the restricted area permit. Nord Extreme arranges every permit for you before the trip starts — check the "Includes" section above for exactly what is covered in the price. Just bring your passport and a few passport-size photos.

What is the accommodation like on the Mustang Tiji Festival?

In Kathmandu you stay in a comfortable hotel; on the trail we use the best available family-run teahouses and lodges with twin-share rooms, shared or attached bathrooms and a warm dining room. Upgrades to luxury lodges are possible on popular routes such as Everest and Annapurna.

Can I book the Mustang Tiji Festival as a private trip or join a group?

Both. You can join one of the fixed departures listed under "Dates & Prices", or book a private trip for just you, your family or friends on any date. Solo travellers are welcome — you will always have your own licensed guide.

Do I need travel insurance for the Mustang Tiji Festival?

Yes, travel insurance is compulsory. It must cover medical treatment and emergency helicopter evacuation up to the trip’s highest altitude, plus trip cancellation. Please send us your policy details before departure.

What should I pack for the Mustang Tiji Festival?

See the "What to bring" checklist on this page for the full list. The essentials are broken-in boots, warm layers, a down jacket, a waterproof shell, sun protection and a daypack. Down jackets and sleeping bags can be rented cheaply in Kathmandu, and a porter carries your main bag (up to 10–12 kg).

Ready to book or have a question?

Trip page: https://delightful-orange-chimpanzee.tarevirjungleresort.com/holiday/package/mustang-tiji-festival/

Contact our team in Kathmandu: sonam@nordextreme.com · +977 9851078748 · delightful-orange-chimpanzee.tarevirjungleresort.com