

# THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TRAIL (IP TRAIL)

'[WWW.iptrail.org](http://WWW.iptrail.org)', Ramechhap, Nepal

*New trekking trail traversing one of the most culturally diverse areas in Nepal*



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Ramechhap, only 100km east from Kathmandu, offers a trekking experience unequalled in Nepal. Sandwiched between the high Himalayan range to the north and the rolling Maharbhata range to the south, trekking in Ramechhap offers magnificent Himalayan panoramas, lush rhododendron forests, and unique cultural experiences. The elevation ranges from 488m at the Sun Kosi River to Numburchuli peak along Everest Himal range at 6959m. Vistas of the rolling foothills dotted with isolated farming communities, rhododendron forests and bamboo groves, all crowned by an array of snow peaks are bound to leave you breathless. The cultural rituals surrounding Buddhism and Hinduism are another major attraction. But the foremost prize of the whole experience is the chance to meet people from 21 different Indigenous communities, learn about them and their culture- yes, all of the above in one trek. You will feel good knowing that your visit is genuinely helping your hosts. And what's more, you can relax on one of the best beaches in Nepal!!

The real Ramechhap can be explored through the recently developed two new trails (i) 7/8 Days '**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TRAIL**' ([www.IPtrail.org](http://www.IPtrail.org)) in the west and (ii) the 14 to 16 Days '**NUMBUR CHEESE CIRCUIT**' ([www.numburcheesecircuit.org](http://www.numburcheesecircuit.org)) in north Ramechhap. Efforts for developing two new trails in the district was coordinated by the Local Economic Development (LED) Forum Ramechhap with the active leadership of District Development Committee (DDC) Ramechhap and the Ramechhap Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) along with the technical and financial support from International Labor Organization/Employment and Peace Building based on Local Economic Development (ILO/EmPLED). The promotional efforts are undertaken jointly with the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal (TAAN) and Trekking Agencies in Nepal.

## ABOUT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TRAIL PRODUCT

Escape the congestion of commercialized trekking routes and get 'off-the-beaten track' to experience the real Nepal- take the 'Indigenous Peoples (IP) Trail in west Ramechhap District, 130km east of Nepal's capital, Kathmandu. The IP Trail offers unique exposure to one of the most culturally diverse areas of Nepal combined with a beautiful natural landscape. Bound by Sailung Peak in the north, the golden Sun Koshi River flowing along the south and the aqua-blue Tama Koshi River to the east, the IP Trail offers an incomparable combination of cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity coupled with breathtaking Himalayan and mid-Hill panoramas.

Falling entirely on the Mahabharat range, the IP Trail mainly offers local Home-stay accommodation providing trekkers with a rare opportunity to experience- the first of its kind in Nepal- the culture and lifestyle of six different ethnic groups. It is a relatively soft, top-down, gentle trek fit for all categories of trekkers and particularly suited to visitors wishing to avoid extreme high altitudes (the trail takes visitors from a starting elevation of 3146m at Sailung to 533m at Lubughat of Koshi river basin) within a week or less of holiday.

### Major features of Indigenous Peoples Trail (IPT)

**Name** : Indigenous people Trail

**Location**: Western Ramechhap (Starting from Sindhupalchowk/Dolakha and ends at Kavre/Sindhuli)

**Elevation**: Lubughat (533m) to Sailung (3146m)

**Duration**: 7/8 days

**Accommodation**: Home-stays and Community Lodge

**Major river valley**: Sunkoshi and Tamakoshi

**Major ethnic groups** : 6 (Sherpa, Newar, Tamang, Thami, Tamang, Yolmo, Majhi)

**Major view points**: Sailung, Augleshwori, Khandadevi, Sunapati

**Major Attractions**: Culture and traditions of 6 major ethnic groups, Panoramic Mountain views, Folded Mahabharat, biodiversity at sub-tropical to upper temperate forest

**Price**: Consult with trekking agencies in Nepal

## **MAJOR TOURISM ATTRACTIONS**

The 'Indigenous Peoples Trail' presents an incomparable, natural blend of cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity coupled with breathtaking Himalayan panoramas and scenic landscape. It boasts spectacular mountain views from Sailung, offering a rare unimpeded Himalayan panoramic view of 400km including the Annapurna, Manaslu, Ganesh, Langtang, Jugal, Rolwaling, Everest and Kanchenjunga ranges. Against this magnificent Himalayan backdrop, visitors gain a memorable insight into the culture and lifestyle of at least six local indigenous people: Sherpa, Newar, Thami, Tamang, Yolmo and Majhis. Each community along the way has unique features and the village vistas combine scenic landscape with breathtaking Himalayan panoramas. The two predominant religions, Buddhism and Hinduism, are ever present in the form of daily rituals, temples, stupas, monasteries and sacred caves. Home-stay accommodation and cultural performances offer closer contact with Nepali hospitality and greater insight into ethnic lifestyles that cannot be found along the more developed trekking venues where interactions can be more commercially oriented.



The trail passes through the beautifully folded Mahabharat range and rolling terraced farmlands of traditional agricultural practices. The pristine forests at Sailung, Rajveer, Augleshwori, Galba and Khandadevi provide the unique habitat for various species of pheasant, deer and Langur monkey as well as seasonal blooming rhododendron. The final trail stop at Lubughat on the Sun Koshi River, provides visitors the opportunity for river fishing and rafting combined with the unique culture of the host Majhi community, who are Nepal's indigenous riparian people. The beautiful sunset and sunrise view and waterfall along the river at Daduwa, thatched houses and traditional colorful festivals such as Lhosar (February), Buddha Purnima (May), Janaipurnima (August), Sora-shraddha (September), are also among the special attractions of the trail.

Categorically, visitors can explore following tourism attractions in the IP Trail:

- Mountain panorama** : From Everest region to the east to Annapurna to the west. Significant panoramas are the Numbur, Rolwaling and Langtang ranges
- Other mesmerizing landscape** : Folded Mahabharat hills, rolling terraced farmlands, waterfalls (Surkey), Serpentine Sunkoshi River
- Major Valley** : Sunkoshi River and Tamakoshi River valleys
- Major ethnic groups** : Sherpa, Thami, Newar, Tamang, Yolmo and Majhi
- Sacred pilgrimage sites** : Thulo Sailung, Rajveer, Khandadevi, Augleshwori and Sunapati
- Best view points** : Sailung, Augleshwori, Khandadevi, Sunapati
- Beautiful monastery** : Rajveer, Doramba, Domgme
- Beautiful flora** : Sub-tropical to temperate vegetation, Sal forest, Pine forest, Alnus and blooming rhododendron
- Beautiful fauna** : Various species of birds, Deer, Langur Monkey, varieties of endemic fishes
- Socio-economic-practices**: Terraced farming, ethno-botanical practices, thatched houses, mechanical grinding of rice and millet
- Socio-cultural practices** : Lhosar celebration, Janaipurnima festival, Buddhapurnima festival, Sorashraddha, Shamanic performances, Lama Dances

## **MAJOR TOURIST ACTIVITIES**

The serenely peaceful and scenic IP Trail has been designed primarily for Home stay-based cultural trekking experience. The unique tourism activities include soft trekking, panoramic mountain views, visits to sacred Sailung, monastery visits at Rajveer (offering meditation), Doramba and Dongme, temple visit

at Khandadevi, forest walks, bird watching, traditionally decorated homes, sunset and sunrise views and cultural performances. Traditional agricultural practices and Majhi fishing are additional attractions along the IP Trail. Mountain biking is also possible along the trail. Visitors can enjoy the following tourist activities on the IP Trail:

**Exciting driving through the mountain:** Kathmandu –Mudhe-Dhunge.

**Home-stay experiences:** Kholakharka, Surkey, Doramba, Khandadevi and Lubughat

**Monastery/community lodge experience:** Kholakharka and Dongme

**Monastery visit:** Rajveer, Doramba, Dongme

**Pilgrimage visit:** Thulo Sailung, Rajveer, Augleshwori Temple, Khandadevi temple, Dongme Monastery

**Cultural performance:** Sherpa (Rajveer), Thami (Surkey/Tinghare), Tamang (Doramba), Yolmo (Dongme), Majhi (Lubughat)

**Slow food organic food experiences:** Potato, barley, mushroom, and other local foods

**Soft trekking:** Dhunge-Sailung-Lubughat

**Sunrise/sunset view observation:** Thulosailung, Doramba, Khandadevi, Sunapati

**Mountain biking:** Throughout the trail (from Mudhe to Lubughat)

**Rafting:** Lubughat-Seleghat

**Fishing:** Lubughat, Seleghat

**Forest walks:** Khandadevi-Hiledevi section

**Bird watching:** Dhunge-Sailung, Kholakharka-Rajveer, Surkey-Doramba, Khandadevi-Hiledevi section.

**Bio-diversity study:** Temperate to alpine vegetation, rhododendron, conifers, birch, colored pasture grasses, NTFPs, a variety of bird species, deer, jackal, fox, clouded leopard.

**Agri-tourism activities:** Participating in rice and millet cultivation and harvesting.

**Fish and pig BBQ:** Lubughat, Seleghat

## ITINERARY AND PACKAGES

A 7-night/ 8-day package is recommended for IP Trail, while an exciting 4/5-days package can appropriately be customized for tourists with less time. The IP Trail formally starts at the Dhunge/Chaichhap bazaar of Dolakha district followed by a short hike thereafter to Sailung Peak, the trek's highest point. The trail meanders through ethnic community settlements at Rajveer, Surkey, Doramba, Khandadevi and Dongme, and ends at Lubughat. A separate 4 days Majhi fishing experience can also be experienced either as a part of IP Trail package or as a standalone product to Lubughat and Seleghat.



Following itinerary has been recommended for IP Trail.

Day	From	To	Accommodation type	Elevation (m)	Time (hours)	Special features
1	Kathmandu	Kholakharka	Community lodge	2950	7.00	Sailung, panoramic views
2	Kholakharka	Kholakharka	Community lodge	2950		Monastery, Sherpa cultural package
3	Kholakharka	Surkey	Home-stay	1850	4.30	Newari home-stay, Thami cultural package
4	Surkey	Doramba	Home-stay	2025	4.00	Tamang home-stay, Tamang cultural package
5	Doramba	Khandadevi	Home-stay	1985	4.30	Khandadevi Temple, animal sacrifices, scenic landscape, sunset/ sunrise view
6	Khandadevi	Hiledevi	Monastery lodge	1980	4.00	Yolmo cultural package, Monastery visit, wilderness walk
7	Hiledevi	Lubughat	Home-stay	533	4.00	Majhi cultural package, fishing and rafting
8	Lubughat	Kathmandu	Hotel/Lodge		4.00	Driving through Roshi river from Nepalthowk

## DAY-WISE PACKAGES

### DAY 1: Kathmandu-Dhunge-Sailung (7 hours)

The starting point is Dhunge village in Dolakha district, accessible by local bus from Mudhe (on the Kathmandu-Charikot-Jiri hardtop road), a 3-hour drive from Dhulikhel or 4.5 hours from Kathmandu. From Dhunge, a short 90-minute climb will take you to Sailung hilltop. Follow the short trail down to the Sherpa village of Khola Kharka where you will spend the night in the newly established Khola Kharka Community Lodge run by local Sherpa and Tamang.



### DAY 2: Sailung & Rajveer Environs

Rise early to reach the summit of Thulo Sailung as the sun rises over the Eastern Himalaya. At 3,146 m Sailung offers magnificent views of the Annapurna, Manalsu, Ganesh Himal, Langtang, Dorje-Lhakpa, Rowaling, Everest and Kanchenjunga ranges. To the south the Mahabharata hills roll over the Sun Koshi River sliding down to the Tarai lowlands. Thulo Sailung is regarded by the Tamangs as the abode of their territorial deity, Sailung Phoi Sibda Karpo, which literally means 'White Male Lord of the Earth'. The chorten atop Sailung is the seat of this divine protector and the Tamang Community are the age-old 'custodians' of the land. The souls of the ancestors together with the 'Lord of the Earth' guarantee the wellbeing of the people and the fertility of the soil. The four clusters of stone chorten on the summit are related to the Tamang Communities in the surrounding area – the groups on the highest point facing south over Ramechhap, today in ruins, are the largest. At the chortens Buddhist Priests perform 'mandala offerings' for the rebirth of the souls of the deceased. The lingams surrounding the Chorten are erected during Tamang death rituals and are left there to succumb to the forces of nature. The main rituals held here are Buddhist offerings to the souls of the deceased. During the festival of Janai Purnima (Saun Purnima), held on the full moon of July/August Tamang pilgrims crowd around the ruined Chortens at the highest point of Thulo Sailung. No blood sacrifices are permitted on Thulo Sailung as the shamans surrender to Buddhist Dominance and refrain from offering blood to the fierce female deities. Other sites of interest around Thulo Sailung include three formations of a tiger, snake and cow representing the coexistence between Buddhist, Shamanic and Hindu beliefs.



The King of the Tigers lived on Thulo Sailung. One day he was pursuing a cow grazing on the meadows of Thulo Sailung. Suddenly a snake appeared from the soil and came between the tiger and the cow. The three turned to stone and thus the cow was saved from the tiger. Two rocks below Thulo Sailung bear the footprint of Padmasambhava and his sword. Located below the summit of Thulo Sailung is Gaurighat cave.



It is believed that on full moon nights 'milk' is said to ooze from the stalagmites inside the cave. The cave is believed to be a source of fertility and health. Pilgrims pray for the birth of sons, relief from illness and for personal success and wealth. The cave is also considered the entrance to the netherworld, the realm of the nagas serpent deity. Legend has it that when a yogi meditates inside the cave for five years, a door leading to the interior of the mountain appears.



A second cave locally known as 'Buddha's Gate' or the 'Door of Dharma' has an exit hole almost too small for human passage. Only the most devout Buddhists who have not committed sin may pass. Squeeze through in the hope of purging yourself of sin and emerge pure! The third small cave, the Godavari cave, is believed to see flow of whitewater every twelve years at the full moon of August/September during which Hindu's take a sacred bath to ritually purify the body. These caves are also associated with the Hindu God Mahadev, the popular form of Shiva, together with his female consort Seti Devi, the 'White Goddess' Parvati.



According to a legend, a shepherd discovered his cow giving milk at a large phallic rock inside the cave. The rock as it turned out was Mahadev himself. Enjoy lunch in Khola Kharka and continue along the trail, passing through rhododendrons blossoming along the way amidst the chirping of birds and insects. A short

downhill stroll brings you to the Rajveer Monastery built by the Bhutanese Drukpa Kagyu School in 1972. The monastery also offers meditation stays. The craftsmen responsible for the paintings and frescoes came from Bhutan. Savour the evening Sherpa cultural programme before your overnight at Kholakharka.

**DAY 3: Kholakharka-Rajveer-Surkey (4.30 hours)**

During the descent to Surkey Village through the Sailung forest, you will see a wide variety of native tree, shrub and bird species. Tourists are welcome at Rajveer monastery to receive a blessing from the Lamas. Along the route you pass through the Sherpa village of Dadhuwa-Dara and a Tamang village, each with their own Buddhist Gompas. Prayer flags, chortens and mani stones are scattered along the route.



The trail continues to descend where the spectacular 40 foot 'Thinghare' water fall crashes onto the rocks below. A short climb brings you to the beautifully terraced settlement of Surke where you will spend the night in one of five newly renovated Newari Home-stays houses.



Spend a day in the village, enjoy Newari cultural, and visit the endangered Thami Community.





The local Thami band is on hand to entertain and visitors can sample the local Raksi! Thangmi, known in Nepali as 'Thami', is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken by around 30,000 people in eastern Nepal.



**DAY 4: Surkey-Tinghare-Doramba (4 hours)**

Experience the Thami cultural programme at Tinghare village before taking lunch at Deurali. Then move towards Doramba valley where the trail traverses along the forested hillside around to the terraced fields of Doramba. The trail leisurely follows the contours of the valley leading to the bustling Doramba Bazaar, where you can purchase cold drinks, snacks and music cassettes of a local Tamang singer, Shashi Moktan.

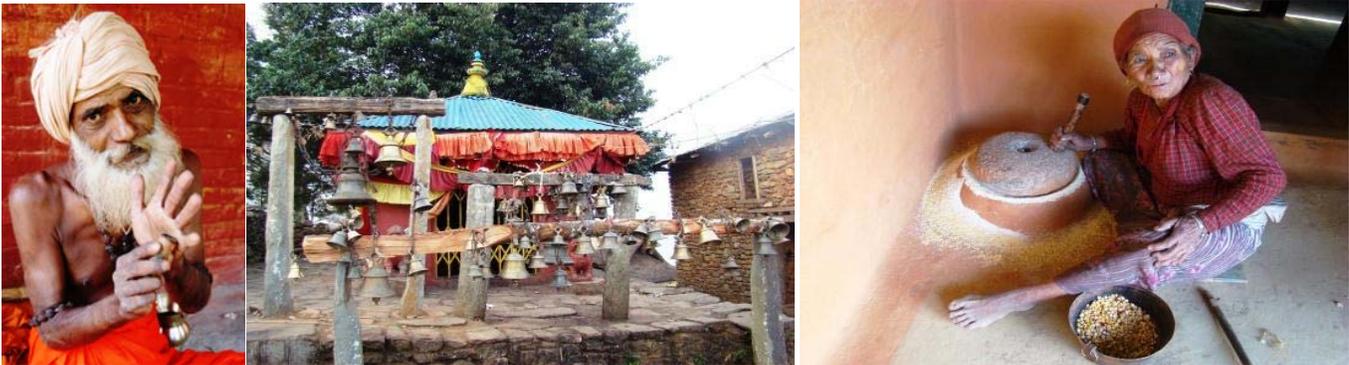


Tonight you will sleep in a local Tamang Homestay. Doramba is one of the largest Tamang settlements in Nepal; in fact, most of the Thangka painters found in Bhaktapur and Bouddha are originally from this remote village. Enjoy a superb evening cultural performance.



**DAY 5: Doramba-Galba-Khandadevi (4.30 hours)**

After a pleasant walk out of the Doramba valley, the route ascends to the sacred Hindu shrine atop Agleshwari Danda where you will be rewarded with stunning views of the Himalaya and the rolling Mahabharat hills below. Descend through the local slate mine, through pine forests to emerging at Galpa Bazaar. Galpa Bazaar is a bustling centre where you can purchase cold drinks and snacks, an ideal place to break for lunch. About 2 more hours walking brings you to the Khandadevi temple. Perched on top of a 1985m peak, Khandadevi is situated around a captivating Hindu Temple complex encircled by ancient stone walls. The temple, dedicated to Goddess Khada Devi, was discovered in 1458 AD by a shepherd who discovered milk oozing from a sacred stone, an emanation of the Goddess. The site also served as a fortress during the Anglo-Nepal war. The setting is dominated by high hills of lush green Maharabharat Range with snowy peaks of Numburchuli and Gaurishankar on the northern horizon and southern views over the flat Tarai. Daily animal sacrifices, 'Panchabale', are still carried out today. Enjoy your night at the newly developed Home-stay.



**DAY 6: Khandadevi-Hiledevi/Dongme (4 hours)**

Following the pre-dawn and sunrise photographic experience start your trek towards Hiledevi following a long ridge of thick pine forest.

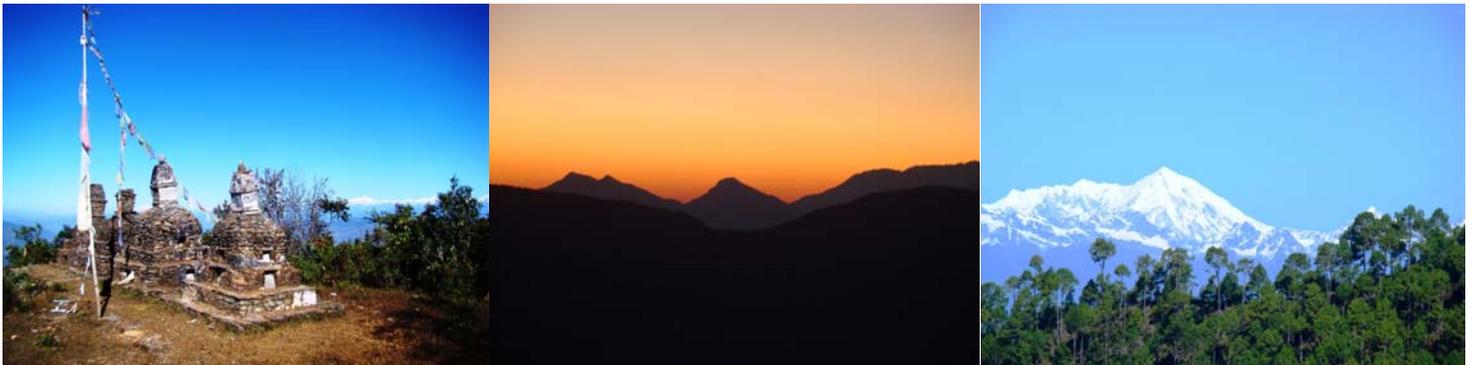


The trail traverses up and down through thick pine forests before crossing into another valley. Amidst the forest you encounter with the several birds and mammals as well as the enormous rock adorned with a

Shiva image before emerging at Dhonghme, an ancient Yolmo or settlement, inhabited by many Lamas. Much of the Yolmo youth are employed as Thangka painters in Kathmandu.



In the evening, make the gradual climb to the summit of Sunapati, well-known for its spectacular sunrises and sunsets. Here amongst the Buddhist Chortens you can enjoy sunset over the Himalaya before returning to the monastery lodge to spend the night and enjoy a Yolmo cultural evening.



#### **DAY 7: Hiledevi-Sunapati-Lubughat (4 hours)**

The next morning you get to enjoy an equally stunning sunrise before the final descent to the village of Lubughat on the renowned golden Koshi River. You will be enjoying the newly renovated eco trails while reaching the Sunapati hilltop. After arriving in Lubughat, you will meet the Majhi people, renowned for their fishing expertise and extraordinary culture.

Roaming through the rivers, men, women and children repeatedly hurl nets in hopes of catching fish. You will spend your last day and night here in Lubughat participating in Majhi fishing and enjoying a cultural demonstration before rising early the next morning.



The Majhi fishing and BBQ experiences at Lubughat and further down at Seleghat have additional business potential as standalone products for short duration tourists due to close proximity to Kathmandu. Seleghat and Lubughat can also be a nice stop for rafting visitors as well.



### **DAY 8: Lubughat-Nepalthowk-Dhulikhel/Ktm (4 hours)**

A 45 minute walking through the River valley takes you to Nepalthowk. Catch the bus for the one-hour journey up Dhulikhel where you can find luxurious hotels and stunning Himalayan views before returning to Kathmandu. Take an extra night at one of the many comfortable lodges in Dhulikhel or continue direct to Kathmandu.

### **MAJHI FISHING EXPERIENCES**

Fishing with the Majhis offers an experience not found elsewhere in Nepal. On the white sand banks of the renowned Sun Koshi river you will learn traditional fishing skills from the Majhi peoples, enjoy a fresh fish BBQ and/or pig roast, and gain appreciation for Mahji culture throughout the day and during the Majhi music concert. Relax on the sandy riverbank and sunbathe. The Majhi Fishing Experience is located in the riverside Majhi villages of Lubughat and Seleghat in the remote west and southern parts of Ramechhap District. This unique experience can be added to your Sun Koshi rafting trip (Seleghat) or can be a day trip arranged from Kathmandu/Dhulikel (Lubughat).

### **BEST SEASON AND EVENTS**

IP Trail is possible throughout the year. However, March to June and September to December are the best seasons for trekking the IP Trail. Saune Sakranti (mid of July), Sorha Shradda (mid of September), Janai-puirnima (end of August) and Maghi (mid of February), Lhosar (February), are some of the important festival where various traditional events, rituals are celebrated.

### **TOURIST FACILITIES**

#### **ACCOMMODATION**

IP Trail is a home-stay accommodation based cultural trekking trail built on the local cultures. The 'Indigenous Peoples Trail' has comfortable accommodation available to meet the basic tourist standards.

#### **HOME-STAY ACCOMMODATION**

Throughout the IP trail, home-stay accommodation offers closer contact and greater insight into ethnic lifestyles that cannot be found along the more developed trekking venues where interactions can be more commercially oriented. Visitors can enjoy the basic accommodation and lodging facilities at the traditionally managed home-stays of various ethnic communities. Boiled and filtered drinking water and hygienically tiled toilets are available at all accommodation options and bucket hot shower can be available upon request.

The 'IP Trail' allows you to stay overnight in private homes in traditional villages far from commercialized tourist trails. Rooms in local houses are renovated, but otherwise expect a few tourist-style comforts. Host families are trained to prepare meals hygienically. When staying with a Nepali family guests live the life as the local people do, and are treated as part of the family. The homes reflect the traditional and simple

atmosphere of the people and their culture. Apart from the pleasure of being in a peaceful and serene environment, tourists can also enjoy the traditional folk dances and music presented by the local men and women in their colorful traditional attire. The focus for the guests is on experiencing and learning from an authentic and enriched culture. Visitors are often involved in local activities that range from cooking classes to attending a traditional wedding, watching a local cultural dance and farm work activities. The Home-stay allows visitors to discover the real Nepal and to enjoy untouched countryside.

#### **What is a Home-stay?**

Rural Nepali's have a traditional love for meeting people, making new friends and welcoming guests into their homes. In turn, for many Nepali as well as visitors to Nepal, there is little that is more interesting than staying as guests in a traditional Nepali home. When staying with a Nepali family guests live the life as the local people do, and feel being treated like part of the family.

Home-stays provide an authentic visitor experience that directly improves the lives and heritage of local Communities and aims to discover the real Nepal and to enjoy the untouched and undisturbed countryside. The homes are not hotel; instead they reflect the traditional and simple atmosphere of the people. Apart from the pleasure of being amidst peaceful and serene environment, tourists can also enjoy the traditional folk dances and music presented by the. The focus for the guests is on experiencing and learning from an authentic and enriched culture. Visitors are often involved in local activities that range from cooking classes through to attending a traditional wedding, watching a local cultural dance. In addition, the program increasingly responds to the growing interest among urban Nepali to rediscover, taste, appreciate and maintain contact with their rural roots.

Local people organize and host the visitors and therefore are the primary recipients of the benefits, financial and otherwise, that accrue from the tourism activity. In addition to the host families, many of the micro-enterprises in the locality also benefit directly from the influx of tourists and increase demand for their products. The home-stay concept provides the ideal vehicle for visitors to experience the rural and traditional Nepali way of life, and for the local community to participate in and benefit directly from tourism. By staying at one of our Home-stays a certain percentage of the accommodation price you cover is placed into a community fund to support further community projects as decided by the local village tourism development committee.

#### **COMMUNITY/MONASTERY LODGE**

Visitor can experience the community/monastery lodge in Kholakharka and Dongme. In Dongme, you will be enjoying the accommodation and lodging managed at the monastery guest house by the Hyolmo people where as in Kholakharka, there is a community lodge run by local Sherpa and Tamangs.

#### **OTHER FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

##### **ACCESSIBILITY**

A Kathmandu-Deurali-Dhunge regular bus service takes visitors to Dhunge within 5/6 hours via Mudhe bazaar at Araniko highway. The seven days long trek finally reaches Lubughat. The next morning, visitors can catch a bus/microbus at Nepalthok, 30 minutes walking distance from Lubughat that goes to Dhulikhel/Kathmandu within 2/3 hours.

##### **COMMUNICATION**

Local telephone facilities are available in every village along the way with ISD available in Doramba, Galpa Bazaar and Lubughat. Internet is ONLY accessible in Dhulikhel and Kathmandu.

##### **HEALTH FACILITIES**

Along the trail in Daduwa, Deurali, Doramba, Manthali, Galpa Bazaar, Pokharidanda, and Nepalthok are health posts providing basic health facilities. As the trek remains at relatively low altitudes there is little chance of altitude sickness.

## TREKKING SUPPLIES

As the trail is new, visitors are advised to hire an experienced trekking guide skilled in basic cooking. Visitors are also advised to bring a first aid kit, and handy food such as dried fruits, chocolate etc, a hat and hiking clothing, sunglasses and sun cream.

## BOOKING AND INFORMATION

Visitors can communicate, make inquiry about the products and book the NCC package with the Government registered trekking agencies at Kathmandu. There are more than 700 formally registered trekking agencies in Nepal. Even if you are a free individual trekker (FIT) you can consult and inquire about the packages with trekking agencies.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

Detail information about Indigenous peoples Trail can be obtained from the trekking agencies in Kathmandu, Nepal. More detail about the trail can be further obtained from the following persons living along the route:

Places	Name and Telephone/mobile
Sailung/ Kholakharka	Dawa Chhiri Sherpa (9741115499), Phulmaya Moktan (9841196610)
Rajveer	Dawa Sangbo Sherpa (Rajveer) 048-690442
Surkey	Dil Kumar Shrestha (9741056938), Krishna Shrestha (9741146211, 9744025574), Ms. Chini Maya Thami -Local Guide (9741077768)
Doramba	Resham Yonjan (9844044004), Marsang Moktan (9844066573), Mabin Thing, (9844043380, 9741184770), Mr. Tulku Lama (048-690226), Bugmaya Moktan -Local Guide (048: 690226, 9841052256)
Khandadevi	Mr. Laxmi Bahadur Tamang (9741039354)
Dongme	Mr. Puspa Lama (9849172798), Mr. Padam Lama (016-913523), Ms. Shanti Lama/Moktan- Local Guide (9849056693)
Lubughat	Mr. Majoj Tamang (9741188310)
Kathmandu	Sonam Sherpa (9841622762, sonamhappy@yahoo.com), Jagat Shrestha (9851086076)

## SOME USEFUL ADDRESS and LINKS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Following links could also be useful in obtaining more detail about trekking in Nepal and in NCC as well:

1. Western Ramechhap Tourism Development Committee, Ramechhap [info@iptrail.org](mailto:info@iptrail.org).np, [www.iptrail.org](http://www.iptrail.org)
2. District Development Committee, Manthali, Ramechhap, Tel: 977-1-540114, email: [ddcrchh@ntc.np](mailto:ddcrchh@ntc.np)
3. Ramechhap Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Manthali Ramechhap, Tel: 977-1-540028, email: [rcci@ntc.net.np](mailto:rcci@ntc.net.np)
4. Janabhabana Youth Club (JYC), Tokarpur, Ramechhap, Mobile: 977-9741044764)
5. Nepal Tourism Board  
Po Box. 11018, Bhrikutimandap, Kathmandu  
Tel: 977-1-4256909, 4256910, info@ntb.org.np, Tel.: 977-1-4427473 , 4440920, 4440921 ,  
Fax: 977-1-4419245  
E-mail: [info@ntb.org.np](mailto:info@ntb.org.np), Web site: [www.welcomenepal.com](http://www.welcomenepal.com)
6. Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal (TAAN)  
P.O. Box # 3612, Maligaun Ganeshthan, Kathmandu  
Web site: <http://www.taan.org.np>
7. Nepal Rafting Agencies Association of Nepal (NARA)  
Box: 3586, Jyatha, Thamel, Kathmandu, Email: [nara@enet.com.np](mailto:nara@enet.com.np), Tel: 977-1 4244048, Fax: 977 1 4221197
8. Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA)  
Email: [office@nepalmountaineering.org](mailto:office@nepalmountaineering.org), Tel.: 977-1-4434525, 4435442  
Web site: [www.nepalmountaineering.org](http://www.nepalmountaineering.org)

9. Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation  
Web site: <http://www.tourismnepal.gov.np>
10. National Foundation for development of indigenous nationalities  
Web site: [www.nfdin.gov.np](http://www.nfdin.gov.np)
11. National Foundation for development of indigenous nationalities  
Web site: [www.nfdin.gov.np](http://www.nfdin.gov.np)
12. Ram Chandra Sedai, [sedairam@yahoo.com](mailto:sedairam@yahoo.com), 977-9741017257 (For more details about Numbur Cheese Circuit and Indigenous Peoples Trail products)

### **TREKKING MAP**

The trekking map of IP Trail prepared in a 1:75000 scale by Himalayan Map House (HMH) Kathmandu Nepal with full details of tourist attractions, facilities and services may be useful for the visitors.



## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Indigenous People**

- (1) *tribal peoples in independent countries, whose social and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs and traditions or by special laws or regulations;*
- (2) *peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their social, economic, cultural and political institutions.*

According to the 2001 Census, indigenous peoples comprise 36.31% of the total population of Nepal (22.7 million) and are in the majority in 27 of the 75 districts. The Government of Nepal (GoN) has identified and recognized 59 nationalities of Nepal through the enactment of the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities Act, 2002. 57.9% of the total populations in Ramechhap belong to indigenous communities. Out of the total 55 VDCs in Ramechhap, indigenous populations are in majority in 34 VDCs. In all, there are 21 indigenous groups in Ramechhap. As the Ramechhap district falls within the territory what is historically known as homeland of indigenous Tamang nation, they form the largest size.

### **Tamang**

By their location on the ancient trading routes, the history of Tamangs has been influenced by Buddhist Tibet and the Hindu Malla kingdom of Kathmandu. Traditional customs are still followed during births, deaths, marriages and at other important times in a person's life. The "Tamang Selo" dance is performed to the rhythmic sound of the "Dampoo" musical instrument which the dancers carry. The dance full of fun and vigor and the brisk movement and rhythmic beat of the Dampoo depicts a style peculiar to the Tamangs. It is performed on occasions like marriage ceremony, Lho-Chhar, childbirth and village fairs. For more information visit the <http://www.tamangsamaj.com/>



### **Majhi**

The Majhis are indigenous to Nepal and are known throughout the country for their fishing expertise. From the early dawn the Majhi have had a special and intimate relationship with the rivers of Nepal and hence mostly inhabit the banks of Nepal's rivers. Possessing their own language, dress, and culture, the Majhi people are very proud of their heritage and communicate this through their own traditional songs, dances and many ritual functions. The ancestral occupation of the Majhi people is to help other people in crossing the many rivers of Nepal in their Majhi made boats. However modern bridges and government interference in their traditional working areas is destroying the traditional Majhi way of life. For more information visit the <http://www.pantribalconfederacy.com/majhi/introduction.php>



## Yolmo

Yolmo are the Indigenous people of the Helambu region, which comprises the Northwest part of Sindhupalchok, Northeast part of Nuwakot and Southeast part of Rasuwa districts. The name, Yolmo, has



been derived by two words Yol (high area surrounded by mountains) and Mo (goddess). Like the other inhabitants of the northern region, the culture and identity of Yolmo indigenous people are derived from Tibetan language and culture. Mahayana Buddhism has been practiced in Yolmo lands since at the 8th century, when Guru Padmasambhava, the founder of Mahayana Buddhism, traveled there and chose it as one of the places to leave behind his secret treasures of wisdom. Also the great Tibetan yogi Milarepa pursued his rigorous meditative retreat there. Having strong links to this history and to Mahayana Buddhism in general, the lives of Yolmo people are centered on the Buddhist faith and its practice. As described in the religious text, Yolmo is considered as a sacred and 'hiding places for sacred treasures' where the great master left his sacred treasures

of wisdom (doctrine) concealed to be revealed by powerful masters in future in the time of need. For more information visit the Nepal Yolmo Social Service Association <http://www.yolmo.org.np/>

## Thami

With a total worldwide population of only 30,000, the Thami Indigenous Peoples of Nepal have a unique but endangered culture. According to their mythology, based on their oral tradition and religious texts, Paloke, they are the successors of Yapati Chukku and Sonari Aaji who reached the head of Tamakoshi, while travelling in ancient times, from Simangadh. Thamis call themselves Thangmi, meaning 'people of pastureland' or 'people living in borderlands'. Followers of neither Hinduism nor Buddhism in complete sense, Thami's are worshippers of nature. Today Thami people are well known throughout Nepal for their traditional expertise in producing quality bamboo products and their strong sense of cultural pride. For more information visit the Nepal Thami Society <http://www.geocities.com/thamisociety/>



## Sherpa

Sherpa's, literally translated as easterner, referring to their origins in Eastern Tibet, are well known throughout the world for their reputation as mountaineers and trades people. While their reputation as climbers is nothing short of historic, local Buddhist, animist and cultural traditions equally shape their unique, Tibetan influenced culture and traditions. Also closely connected with Lamaism, Sherpa rites and rituals are based on and determined by their religion. Subsequently, the lamas of the monasteries wearing red robes direct the religious life of the region and are considered the religious social heads of the community. Throughout the year Sherpas show their cultural pride and religious respect through numerous colorful festivals, most notably, Lhasar, Mani Rimdu, and Dumje.

