

# Upper Mustang Tour - A Mystical Substitute to Tibet for Avid Travelers

## 09 Days Exclusive & Personalized Journey

Alternative of Tibet - 4WD Overland Tour

## Trip Highlights

- A tranquil experience of the ancient forbidden Kingdom of Lo.
- Picturesque landscape and natural delights throughout the tour in lower and upper Mustang.
- Closer look at the local culture and lifestyle here with interesting insights to learn.
- A different look at the Himalayas with some of the most unique geographic sights in the world.
- Centuries-old Buddhist monasteries, spiritual monuments, caves, forts, and palaces for a much-unabridged tour.
- Easier to attain visas and permits in comparison to Tibet with similar experiences.
- Opportunity to capture the rarely-documented traditional lifestyle, festivals, and communities of Upper Mustang which was completely isolated till 1991.

## Trip Overview

Upper Mustang has been the ideal place to witness the bliss of majestic Himalayas for the past few years. It is the region where heaven meets earth, a destination like nowhere else in Asia. Drive through this vast remoteness to the purest of adventure to witness a phase of tranquil beauty. The Upper Mustang tour is open for all who love to embrace nature and culture in one go.

The tour starts from the bustling 'City of Temples', Kathmandu. Your thrilling journey continues to the beautiful Pokhara valley next. A mountain flight overlooking the hills and snow-capped mountains marks your arrival at Jomson. A humble touch of change here and a private jeep will allow travelers closer to the magical landscape entering Upper Mustang. Amazing experiences await each day here with a beautiful smile to welcome you graciously.

So why Upper Mustang is considered very much alike Tibet? Well, the lifestyle, culture, and geography are similar to the highest degree. Tibetan Buddhism, mesmerizing art, and historical bonds make the two regions identical too. Add a relaxed and more hospitable environment to the upper Mustang region and you have got a better tour in the Himalayan Shangri-la.

Similarly, Mustang has some unique experiences to offer for travelers who have been to Tibet before. You can

expect a fantastic array of picturesque destinations and activities to align with them. A tour here will reveal the legends and stories Mustang has been nesting for centuries.

Upper Mustang Tour is a deserving better option for those not preferring to trek long hours. With private transportation and guides, your tour here is bound to be memorable. As a tour of adventure and unique interests, Upper Mustang is simply beyond description with words.

## Your Journey day by day

### Day 01 Arrival Kathmandu (1300m)

**Accommodation:** Hotel upon your choice

We will welcome you after landing at the Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA). Our team will lead you straight to your hotel. Considering your arrival time you can spend your spare time shopping and preparing for the tour. You can sneak in some local attractions to your day as well. Similarly, flying to Pokhara on the same day is also plausible given you are comfortable with the flight times. Enjoy the nightlife and diverse market of Thamel to end your day.

Overnight at Kathmandu.

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### Day 02 Drive/Fly to Pokhara (800m) and sightseeing in Pokhara

**Time:** 30 minutes flight / 6 hours drive **Meals:** Breakfast **Accommodation:** Hotel upon your choice

We will pick you up at your hotel and lead you to the domestic terminal of TIA. A short flight from here will take you to the beautiful Pokhara Valley west of the capital. We have a day full of exploration today covering different sites in and around the city. Sarangkot hill, World Peace Stupa, Davis falls, and caves here are some memorable places you can visit today.

Pokhara is a popular adventure hub in Nepal. You have options to visit the other lakes of Pokhara namely Begnas and Rupa lake. The International Mountain Museum and Bindhyabasini Temple are also amongst the suggested places to visit in Pokhara. You can tweak your itinerary to include activities like paragliding, bungee Jump, Zip-lines, ultra-light, and more here. Enjoy the evening in the lakeside area with a sunset view over Phewa Lake.

Overnight at Pokhara.

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## Day 03 Fly to Jomsom (2745m), visit Dhumba Lake and drive to Marpha (2730m)

**Time:** 30 minutes flight **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodation:** Basic Hotel Available

You will enter Mustang with a quick flight from Pokhara today. The morning flight to Jomsom gives you some amazing views as well as a head start to explore more here. We will drive to Dhumba Lake next which is only 4 km from Jomsom. This lake is a usual day-hike destination from Jomsom too. With Nilgiri and Dhaulagiri peaks in the background, this emerald-colored lake is pristine. Dhumba Lake is also sacred and Buddhist monks perform rituals around wishing prosperous life for visitors and devotees alike.

After spending some time at Dhumba Lake we will continue our drive to the iconic Marpha village. Known around Nepal as "The Apple Capital", Marpha is a prominent settlement here. The prayer flags covered houses, beautiful monasteries, and the locals carrying out their daily chores ease into a relaxing experience all around. Marpha is a place people often remember fondly for several other delightful experiences. Stroll around the street and try some local apple products like chips, wine, sweets, and more here.

Overnight at Marpha.

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## Day 04 Drive to Muktinath (3750m) via Kagbeni (2855m) and continue to Chhusang.

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodation:** Basic Hotel Available

Lovely breakfast in Marpha will mark the start of the tour today. We will take a short drive (approx. 30km) to Muktinath Temple via Kagbeni for the first phase. Kagbeni is a picturesque settlement beside the Kaligandaki River which acts as a junction to Muktinath and Upper Mustang. A scenic and relaxed drive then takes us to the Muktinath Temple.

Muktinath is one of the most sacred temples in Nepal. Both Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims visit the temple as the "Place of Liberation". Muktinath temple at an elevation of 3800 meters is also one of the highest temples in the world. You can witness the rituals and prayers from devotees all around the world while you are here. Similarly, the trail from Thorong La in the Annapurna circuit merges here at Muktinath.

From Muktinath, we will resume our tour to Upper Mustang returning to Kagbeni. You will get your restricted area permit checked here. The landscape changes even more and a road carved beside the Kali Gandaki River will take us to Chhusang village. A quick tour around will make you familiar with the lifestyle and culture of Upper Mustang here.

Overnight at Chhusang.

## Day 05 Drive to Lo Manthang (3820m)

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodation:** Basic Hotel Available

We will continue on the tour and enter the heart of the Upper Mustang today. The drive to Lo Manthang from Chhusang is full of some amazing side destinations that we will cover today. Highlighting the day are the beautiful red cliff formations of Dhakmar valley. These steep formations created by natural air tunnels over centuries are a must-see natural wonder. The historically significant Samar Village and Ringsum Gongpa follow soon.

The beautifully barren landscape has some small villages and settlements till we reach Lo Manthang. These villages will serve as your rest and snack stops and you can spend some time talking with the locals as well. After crossing Syangboche, Ghami, and Tsarang on the way we will reach our primary destination Lo Manthang by late afternoon. You can head out for an evening stroll here after quick rest.

Overnight at Lo Manthang.

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## Day 06 Lo Manthang sightseeing including Chhoser Cave, Korola border

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodation:** Basic Hotel Available

Lo Manthang is a compact town with several wonderful attractions that you will enjoy. These include some beautiful monasteries like Thubchen Gompa, Namgyal Gompa, and Choede Museum. Walking through the streets you can witness a place stopped in time with some amazing architecture, paintings, sculptures, and more still untouched by modernization. A short drive from here will take us to Chhoser caves.

Chhoser caves are one of the many sky caves in Mustang with archeological and historical significance. Carved in a steep cave these five-story high formations are believed to be anywhere from 2000 to 3000 years old. Used during different periods here Chhoser caves are the prime example of ancient settlements in Mustang. As of 2021, it is listed as a tentative UNESCO world heritage site.

The tour continues next to the northernmost part of the Upper Mustang tour to the Kora La border between Nepal and Tibet. You can spend some time here enjoying the views and taking some pictures. At 4660 meters of elevation, the border is also the highest point of the Upper Mustang Tour. We will end the day with the return drive to Lo Manthang.

Overnight at Lo Manthang.

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## Day 07 Drive to Jomsom

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodation:** Basic Hotel Available

We will leave Lomanthang early today and drive back to Jomsom. The return trip will allow you to enjoy the views of Mustang from a different perspective once more. After the thrilling ride, you will reach Jomsom to rest for the day. You can explore the local markets here for souvenir shopping in the evening.

Overnight at Jomsom.

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## Day 08 Fly to Pokhara and then drive/fly to Kathmandu

**Time:** 30 minutes flight **Meals:** Breakfast **Accommodation:** Hotel upon your choice

A morning flight from Jomsom will take you back to Pokhara. You can either return to Kathmandu or continue sightseeing in Pokhara today. We suggest the latter as Pokhara is full of amazing destinations and activities for travelers. We will drive you back to your hotel in Kathmandu after landing here. Join us for a farewell dinner and share your stories of the travel with the team. You can also head to some fantastic shops around Thamel for some more souvenir shopping.

Overnight at Kathmandu.

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## Day 09 Departure from Kathmandu.

**Meals:** Breakfast

We will pick you from your hotel for departure and drive you to TIA. The tour completes today and we guarantee you will have some amazing memories to take back with you. We will stay in touch with you for your feedback and suggestions.

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## Cost & Inclusion

**Extras;**

- Airport pickups and drops service.

- Private ground transportation with air-conditioned.
- Hotel accommodation as per your preference.
- Breakfast at hotel.
- Local cultural tour guide with English speaking.
- Sightseeing entrance fees for museums and monuments.

## Essential Information

### Things to know for travelers about the Upper Mustang Tour

- \* Domestic flights to Jomsom from Pokhara are most likely to take place in the morning. Despite the flight being short (20 minutes) there are known cases of it being delayed or canceled depending on the weather.
- \* In case the flight is not available from Pokhara to Jomsom, driving to Lower Mustang is your only alternative. The route is a proper off-road experience which might take around 12 hours or more with several other factors in consideration.
- \* After Jomsom, you have to expect a drop in facilities regarding both food and accommodation. In most places, you can expect basic hygienic foods and warm hospitality.
- \* You have to apply for the restricted area permit before starting the tour from Kathmandu. It will take USD 500\$ for 10 days that will last for the tour duration. Beyond that, you have additional 50\$ per day fee per person. These permits and other documents might be checked in different entry posts.
- \* If you want some more from your Upper Mustang tour, try planning to be there during festivals. Tiji is the largest festival here lasting 3 days. It follows the lunar calendar (often around May) and the whole community gathers to enjoy involving traditional activities.
- \* Altitude sickness symptoms might be observed while traveling to places over 3000 meters in the Himalayas. Driving tours help a lot with it in comparison to trekking. You can take some pills just to be comfortable and follow some health precautions too. There are health posts in different places of the Upper Mustang trip for any severe symptoms too.
- \* Be careful and be a responsible traveler near the Tibetan Borders in Kora La. There are some guidelines and prohibitions to follow as a tourist just to avoid any complications.

The Upper Mustang tour is truly one of a kind. Tick off this magical destination from your bucket list on your next vacation to Nepal. In less than two weeks you will have some wonderful memories and stories to share from the Mystical Mustang regions of the Himalayas.

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