

# Eastern Nepal

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Reliving the glory days of trekking on the peaceful exit route from **Lukla to Tumlingtar** (p236)
- Visiting the **mountain villages** of Sherpas, Rais, Limbus and Walungs – ancient peoples who can trace their history to medieval Tibet
- Camping your way up to ‘the throne of the gods’ – mighty **Makalu**, the fifth-highest peak on earth (p243)
- Getting up close and personal with Kanchenjunga, the world’s third-highest peak, on the treks to **Kanchenjunga North** (p257)

**Forget what people say about going west. The eastern part of Nepal is an untamed frontier, rising to a sheer mountain wall that includes two of the tallest peaks on earth. In the far east of Nepal, Kanchenjunga clocks in as the world’s third-highest peak at 8586m. Further west, mighty Makalu (8463m) comes in at number five. The foothills of these Himalayan giants offer some of the most exciting trekking in Nepal, passing through remote country that provides a flashback to what the whole country must have been like when explorers such as Edmund Hillary made the first ascents in the 1950s.**

Trekking trails in eastern Nepal follow a series of meltwater rivers and streams, passing through a fascinating variety of landscapes – terraced rice fields, dense rhododendron forests, rolling alpine meadows and the desolate lunar landscape of the high Himalaya. The villages along the trails are home to a diverse range of tribal people, but infrastructure is limited and many areas are only open to trekkers on organised camping treks.

Because of the poor state of the roads, most people fly into the tiny airstrips at Tumlingtar and Suketar. There are rustic lodges in many villages, but you’ll need a tent if you hope to reach the base camps for Makalu or Kanchenjunga. The only trek that could reasonably be described as a ‘teahouse trek’ is the descent from Lukla to Tumlingtar, which provides a handy exit route from the more-developed trekking trails in Solu Khumbu.

## CLIMATE

Because of the direction of the monsoon winds, eastern Nepal experiences higher rainfall than many other parts of the country. In spring and autumn, you can expect clouds and rain in the Arun Valley, even when the weather is fine in the rest of the country.

## INFORMATION

### When to Trek

Most trekking routes are open from February to April and October to November, but the upper stages of the Makalu Base Camp and Kanchenjunga treks are closed by snows from December to February.

The monsoon wreaks havoc in eastern Nepal. Trails and roads are destroyed by

landslides and bridges are washed away every year by the floodwaters, so you may have to wade or go the long way round.

## Maps

The trail from Lukla to Tumlingtar is covered in limited detail on Shangri-La Maps' 1:225,000 *Kangchenjunga Makalu*. The first and last stages of the route are better covered by Nepa Maps' 1:100,000 *Jiri to Everest* and 1:80,000 *Makalu Base Camp*, which also covers the trails to Makalu. Nepa Maps' 1:100,000 *Kangchenjunga Trekking Routes* and 1:100,000 *Kangchenjunga* cover the north and south trails to Kanchenjunga from Taplejung. The second map also includes the new Pathibhara and Limbu cultural trails. The trails to Kanchenjunga

## EASTERN NEPAL

### EASTERN NEPAL – MAPS

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|--|---------|
| 1 Lukla to Tumlingtar & Makalu Base Camp | pp234–5 |
| 2 Kanchenjunga                           | pp250–1 |

TIBET  
(CHINA)



0 30 km  
0 20 miles

1:1,500,000

