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Reignition Kalinchowk 24

A re-treat for the soul in the high hills: living life differently.

Tuesday November 26th to Friday December 6th 2024 (KTM – KTM)

This Reignition is the second in our Nepal series – we ground ourselves in the Gaurishankar area on the Tibetan border, mixing play, discovery and some short but tough and absolutely stunning trekking. We ease ourselves out of the busy-ness of the world, winding down amongst the lush greenery and quiet glades of our river-based retreat centre. Time spent getting back into our bodies with some stretch and strength sessions, strolls around the hill side, working alongside the locals in farm gardens and maybe making some momo! The rest of the time is spent slow trekking up to and along a high ridgeline where we can almost ‘touch’ the Himalayan peaks around us. The high point is Kalinchowk – a shrine to the Goddess Kali, consort to Shiva, and hugely powerful. The shrine is a ‘must’ for Hindus so expect to find ourselves amongst pilgrims from across the sub-continent. Whilst we move slowly, the trekking still requires sustained effort for the significant climbs on mountain paths.

Trip highlights:

- High adventure, slow trekking up, up up and away along wild ridgelines
- Get close to Kali, destroyer goddess, consort to Shiva at a mountain top shrine.
- Being, working and playing alongside local villagers
- Daily stretch and strength sessions
- Time and space to let go of what is no longer serving you – and to play!

Reignition Kalinchowk is an 11-day adventure of the heart, including 4 nights fully supported camping; 5 days of slow, steady but sustained trekking, a heap of soft adventure possibilities and time to try our hand at local life.

Group size: This trip will run with a minimum of 2 people and maximum of 8.



Costs - what's covered and what's not

Trip cost: USD2700 per person (Kathmandu-Kathmandu)

Trip price includes

All in-country travel, transport and accommodation. All drinking water on trip. All meals and snacks on trek. All meals in Kathmandu and other trip venues in Nepal. All permits. Rafting or one other activity at The Last Resort. Sleeping bag, camp mattress, down jacket and duffel bag for trek. All camping equipment including tents, kitchen and washing facilities. COVID test kits and masks. Group medical kit. Entry fees where relevant. Access to solar recharge on trek. Our trek staff are fully covered by relevant insurances – part of the package price covers this.

Coaching-counselling conversations: One coaching-counselling conversation call before and one after the trip is also part of the package. The trip also has multiple opportunities for coaching or counselling style conversations with Jo. We work carefully and diligently to ensure that any group conversations feel safe-enough, comfortable-enough and supported-enough to be a happy place for those that want to explore together.

Trip price excludes

International flights. Trekking, rescue, medical and travel insurance. Personal trekking and travel gear. Money for souvenirs, tips for the crew, drivers and in restaurants etc. Personal medical kit. Massage, laundry and other additional services. Drinks other than drinking water at restaurants and cafes.

Why Reignition?

Life can be full, full-on and full-up with doing, organising, doing, doing, doing.....it's easy to get out of balance, to lose sight of ourselves, of what matters. The Kalinchowk Reignition is a time out, a time and place to restore, replenish, to rest and re-ignite around what matters. It's a retreat from the busy-ness and hard edges, the chance to treat ourselves well, topping up on compassion in the company of good people in a place to make the soul smile.

- Re-treat – simple, smiley, sustainable soul-food
- Re-store with the good things in life – good people, doing good work, living life differently.
- Re-ignite – a time to recentre, replenish and re-find that zing.

Partnerships and local know-how

We work in partnership with locals, whether that's local crew on the treks, ensuring we have the safest vehicles and drivers or guides in the jungles, mountains and rivers. Most

importantly as a team we *know* Nepal and the trip region from our boots to our beanies – this deep knowing enables us to make wise choices, opens doors to friends villages, farms and homes and to share all of this with you to make the places we visit, the sights, sounds and smells all that little bit more meaningful.

Our partners on Kalinchowk 24 are:

The Last Resort – one of the first, leading the way in the creation of beautiful, bespoke places for relaxation, play and adrenaline-pumping micro adventures.

Himalayan Trails – widely recognised in the sector for the consistent quality of the trips, their in-depth knowledge and long-standing relationships and support for sustainable, local adventure tourism development.

Trekking Reignition style – the trails

We trek slowly and steadily. More tortoise than hare. The aim is for you to find a comfortable rhythm within which you may shift up or down a gear as we move on different terrain and slopes.

Reignition trips, for the most part, stay away from the well-known trekking areas and the trekking crowds. We deliberately choose quieter hills where we are unlikely to encounter other groups and have most of our interactions with locals. This enables us to spread the tourist dollar more equitably and, we think, provides a culturally richer, different type of experience for us and our clients. This choice means we trek on trails used by villagers and farmers to move across the land – some are well-trodden, some less so, in some places these have been widened and ‘smoothed’. We’ll need to activate our ‘mountain feet’ to move well on most trails and will also have sections that are easy underfoot where we can focus more on the views and conversing.

Reignition style camping

This is a fully supported camp trek meaning everyone has their own tent (if you’d like) with mattress and sleeping bag provided. We bring a kitchen, dining, toilet and shower tent with us and have a team of kitchen assistants, guides and porters to organise and help prepare food and facilities. We have good coffee, bake fresh breads and will take fresh vegetables and other essentials from the villages nearby – it’s simple, good quality cuisine that directly supports the local economy. Unlike regular trekking trips we strongly encourage you to get involved in food preparation, setting up the dining area etc. It can feel good to work alongside our Nepalese team and satisfying to know we’re all chipping in rather than being waited on hand and foot.

Our duffel bags and all the camp equipment are carried for us by a team of porters. Porterage is an important income source for many locals and is welcomed. Our porter staff are taken care of by us – we provide sleeping facilities, all meals, insurance and of course a good salary. Where possible we hire porters from local villages.

Kalinchowk trip itinerary 2024

Treat this as a draft – things will change as we discover new opportunities on the way, as our group needs and hopes shift.... and it's Nepal! However, we change we will do so in pursuit of reigniting hope, zest and the things that are needed.

Daily rituals: Each day starts with an optional stretch and strength session, a mix of yoga, Pilates and core work to support us when we're trekking and shake out travel stiffness.

Key:

Meals: B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner;

Accommodation: Lo = Local lodge; H = hotel; C = camp

Tuesday 26th Nov Day 1 - arrive in Kathmandu

Meet up, get to know each other and the trip in more detail in a briefing session with Jo and our guide team. Dinner in the city. (H. D)

Wednesday 27th Nov Day 2 – getting into it, getting ready

We take a half day hike on some local trails around the Kathmandu Valley forests and hills ending up at the delightful Kapan gompa and some time for relaxing in their sumptuous gardens and a (re)introduction to Buddhist ideas. We move from here to Bhoudnath stupa. The afternoon is your to explore, relax, get a massage whatever.

Dinner at a local restaurant. (H. BLD)

Thursday 28th Nov Day 3 Out to play

Starting the day with a stretch and strength session we then check out of the hotel to head off in our vehicles for the four-hour ish drive to the Tibet border and [The Last Resort \(TLR\)](#), our home for the next few days. The safari tents and rooms sit amongst lush green jungle, with many places to sit, lay and relax tucked away amongst the vibrant plants, lawns and plunge pools. After lunch we have time to explore the area and get into the gardens and villages, play some games, get hands on (TLR Lo. BLD)

Friday 29th Nov Day 4 Gardens and games

We start with a stretch session. Today we have the option for some TLR soft-adventures, perhaps a short raft trip along the bhote khosi river or maybe a splash through some local canyons. Or we might choose to hike up to waterfalls and other quiet places. There is also plenty of opportunity to get hands on alongside the locals, whether making baskets, using a nanglo, making dhaal or any of the many daily chores that are the weft of life here in these Tamang and Rai villages. We have a trek briefing and a little time to finalise our packing ready for an early start tomorrow. (TLR Lo.BLD)



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Saturday 30th Nov Day 5 Slowly, slowly up we go

After a stretch, some core activation and a hearty breakfast we meet our trekking crew of guide, porters and cook. Setting off the trek today starts with some relatively steep steps climbing away from the river and road. The gradient soon eases as we continue our slow and steady climb up and out of the valley to the village of Anthali (4.5km and 770m elevation gain). Anthali is mainly a Sherpa village, and we'll see tarchen and prayer flags around the houses. Breaking for lunch we trek through fields and small hamlets around and up to the neck of the valley to attain the ridge and our camp site (around 2km further on). Today we camp at around 2100m, an elevation gain of around 1000m from the riverside. Expect hot drinks and tasty snacks on arrival and a delicious home-cooked dinner. (C. BLD)

Sunday 1st Dec Day 6 Up, up and away

We start with some gentle stretching out and an awakening of the core muscles we'll be drawing on as we hike today. After breakfast we continue up the ridge, now into dense rhododendron glades, with some red birch starting to appear. We wend our way up through several kharkas (pastures) encountering the huts of seasonal cow herders and cheesemakers, dipping back into the magical old forests again. We'll camp somewhere between 7 and 8km from our start point and have the remainder of the afternoon to explore, maybe to sit in the camp kitchen and help preparing the evening meal. Camp height will be around 3100m meaning another full 1000m of altitude gain (C.BLD)

Monday 2nd Dec Day 7 La la la

By now we're getting into our morning routine finding what we need to do to prepare our minds and bodies for the day. The morning trails hold around 4km of 'tirse' (Nepali flat) hiking along some of the new trails hovering around the 3200m mark as we contour along the East side of the ridge. With luck we'll have more fabulous views of the shining white peaks of Gaurishankar and the other Rolwaling Himal. Leaving the new trails we climb steadily to a height of around 3400m on stunning alpine trails high above the blue roofs of Dolansa hamlet. A slight descent brings us to the high pastures of the Tingsang La (pass) and our camp for the night. Camp height is around 3200m. This is a shorter day (7-8km) allowing time to explore the small lodges below at Tingsang, to relax or maybe learn to make momos with our fabulous cook team. (C.BLD)

Tuesday 3rd Dec Day 8 Meeting Kali

Today's trekking has steep short climbs and descent, incredible airy contours through alpine scrub, weaving around small rocky faces and streams, gentle wide tracks, majestic rhododendron forests and still upland pools. If we're lucky we may even see a yak or its cousin the dzo! This wild ridgeline brings us up to the Kali shrine, our highest point at 3780m. Breathtaking! Whilst the shrine is only around 500m higher than our

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previous camp, the ridge has a couple of small peaks that we need to ascend and descend, hence our total climbing for the day across the 11km is almost double this at between 900 and 1000m.

From the shrine we make the short descent to the kharkas near the village Kuri and our tents. Camp height around 3400m (C. BLD)

Wed 4th Dec Day 9 the long way down

Many pilgrims ascend the ridge from Kuri to pay devotions to the supremely powerful goddess, Kali. The pujas and devotions generally happen in the early morning. It's a fascinating experience to join the families and friend groups as they light incense, ring bells and take tikka. There are often shamen and other powerful figures here too. We therefore encourage you to head back up to the shrine area and just absorb the atmosphere for an hour or two. You might even fancy taking the cable car back down to Kuri – yes, a cable car!

We have a jeep from Kuri to take us down the rocky 'road' to Charikot, a bustling market town and the location of our lodge for the night. For those with some trekking in their legs, a few kilometers past the bowl of the Kuri valley there are small trails that follow the old ways down through the ancient forest. Hike or hitch a ride in the jeep – it's up to you. At Charikot we stay in the aptly named [Panorama Resort](#) – time to relax in their pretty gardens, take a dip in the pool or a sauna or simply shower and unwind. There's also an option to hike or drive to the nearby town of Dolakha, famous for its 7th century temple dedicated to traders and travelers. Charikot Panorama is a simple and stunningly located lodge with great food and warm hospitality. The evening is all about feasting and clean sheets! (Lo. BLD)

Thursday 5th Dec Day 10 Kathmandu

If we're lucky today's pre-breakfast stretch and strength session will be set against the backdrop of sunrise over the mountains. Well prepared we set off on the 4-5 hour jeep ride back to the bustling city of Kathmandu. Enjoy the scenery as we drop back into the Bhote Khosi valley, through the endless folds of green hills and occasional small towns and villages. Checking in to our hotel, the afternoon is free to relax, do some final shopping or maybe get a massage at one of the many excellent spas. We take our final dinner at a local restaurant. (H. BLD)

Friday 6th Dec Day 11 Farewell

The Reignition trip ends after breakfast. We provide transfers to the airport in time for your international flight. (B)

Gaurishanker and the Rolwaling Himal

In the right conditions this trek is dominated by the Rolwaling himal, the spectacular range of peaks filling the northerly horizons. Gaurishankar is the large blocky peak that stands quite alone. She is the second highest peak of the Rolwaling Himal, behind Melungtse (7,181 m) and regarded as sacred by many Hindus. Gaurishankar has two summit peaks, the southern (lower) peak is called Gauri, a manifestation of the Hindu goddess Parvati, and the northerly peak is her consort Shankar (Shiva). The Sherpas name the mountain as Jomo Tseringma.

Interestingly Nepal Standard Time (GMT+05:45) is based on the meridian of Gaurishankar's peak.

Kalinchowk-Bhagwati shrine



Kali is a fearsome goddess, a form of the supreme goddess Durga. Durga takes many different forms and names, including 'Bagwati'. Kali is a consort to Shiva and destroyer of asuras (demons) in Hinduism and also a key figure in some aspects of Buddhism. It's worth reading some of the many Hindu myths around her to appreciate her power and importance! She is believed to have meditated on the top of this hill.

Photo: Wikipedia – an enraged Kali atop Shiva.