

## List of Essentials

Mountain/adventure travel requires one to be adequately equipped with the right kind of personal gear. Since one is travelling in the wilderness there will be hardly any opportunity to buy anything once you hit the trail so it is essential to plan carefully beforehand. Since the mountain weather is notoriously fickle, it is important to make sure you carry spare dry clothing in case it rains or snows.

- Shirts / T-shirts – 2/3 Quick drying, full sleeved shirts whose arms can be rolled up are the most suitable
- Trekking Pants – 2 Quick drying, light weight and loose cargo pants with a number of pockets.
- Windproof and waterproof jacket of decent quality (no flimsy wind cheaters please!) preferably with a hood.
- Warm and thick Fleece jacket or Full-sleeve Woollen sweater. Essential for higher altitude treks or winter treks.
- Thermal inner wear (upper & lower) This is probably the most important item on the list if you are planning to trek in winter.
- Woollen cap or balaclava.
- Woollen gloves or dual layer water proof gloves.
- Rubber gloves - A pair of medium thickness rubber gloves are very useful if you do not have water proof gloves. They can be worn on top of the normal gloves and are a massive help in protecting the hands from icy, freezing water!
- Woollen socks & regular socks (3-4 pairs) Multiple pairs are essential in case one of your pairs gets soaked in rainwater, snow or by immersion while crossing a stream.
- Scarf/muffler (optional but recommended. It serves the dual purpose of protecting the face from the high Ultra Violet radiation at altitude)

- Comfortable and water proof or water resistant Trekking/Hiking shoes (shoes with a thick sole are recommended) Also please check that the sole grips well on wet surfaces as grip is extremely essential on the downhill sections.
- Lightweight floaters/sandals/slippers
- Lightweight Raincoat / Poncho - Please make sure this is big enough to wrap around and cover you and your haversack.
- Small light weight towel and a couple of hand towels.
- Water bottle (sturdy ones, no empty Bisleri bottles!!) Check if the bottles can be hung by the side of the haversack using carabiners as this would allow your hands to remain free.
- Cap / Hat to keep the strong sun away from your face
- Sun glasses. If you are planning to go for a high altitude trek with wide snow expanses, make sure the glasses are large in size and as dark as possible (usually ski goggles) so that you do not suffer from snow blindness or pain due to the glare.
- Walking stick / Trekking pole. Ensure the pole is sturdy and will take your weight. Also enquire about the various attachments to its tip, especially the snow ring that helps walk on snow.
- Sunscreen Lotion. The UV in the mountains is extremely high and it is advisable to have a sunscreen lotion with maximum spf rating.
- Lip Balm
- Torch / Flashlight (with extra batteries) This is a must! It would be even better to get hold of a good quality headlamp if that is possible.
- Medicines, if requiring any specific medication
- Personal toiletries, especially toilet rolls, hand wash, mouthwash and wet wipes.
- Books, if you like reading
- Day pack/small bag which you will carry on your back every day and keep your essentials in it. This is different from your haversack and needs to be small and light enough to carry basic essentials such as your jacket, torch, snacks and water bottles. Please make sure this is water proof!

- Camera if you like (with fully charged batteries) Please try and have a waterproof case for the camera since the mountain weather is unpredictable and a shower is never too far away!

Carry your stuff in a duffel bag, soft shoulder bag or a rucksack. Avoid suitcases, trolleys or any other hard luggage. As you will be walking long distances carrying a rucksack, avoid bringing unnecessary items on the trek. Please avoid carrying expensive watches, jewellery and electronic items on the trek.

### **Do's and Don'ts:-**

#### **Do's and Don'ts in Mountains, Snow-Bound Areas and Glaciated Terrain During Acclimatisation**

##### **Introduction**

While operating in mountains, snow-bound areas and glaciated terrain, it is very important to acclimatise properly. Acclimatisation is the process of adjusting one's body to the rarefied atmosphere and extreme cold climate of High Altitude Area. It is also very important to proceed as per instructions given by the trek leader, especially along narrow trails or steep scree and snow/ice fields.

##### **Do's.**

- (a) During acclimatisation work on higher altitude and sleep at lower which is accomplished by going along small climbs after campo has been setup alongwith the trek leader.
- (b) Acclimatisation is a must for treks and expeditions operating above 9000 ft.

- (c) Climbers should progressively increase their weight carrying capacity.
- (d) Hydration is extremely important and every climber/trekker should carry at least two litres of water with him/her all the time.
- (e) Climbers and trekkers should report any discomfort to the trek leader and the Medical Support. Warning signs include persistent headache, difficulty in breathing, nausea, dizziness, difficulty in swallowing, persistent cough and difficulty sleeping. Any of these could be signs of various forms of AMS (Altitude Sickness) and should be reported before they get serious.
- (f) First aid kit and emergency AMS injections such as dexamethasone should always be carried by support medical staff.
- (g) Electrol/Glucose powder and salt should be carried.
- (h) Always follow the instructions of the trek leader, especially when roped up along snow/ice fields.
- (i) Keep yourself covered and warm especially when there is a chill wind blowing.
- (k) Use sunscreen lotions and lip salve religiously.
- (l) Eat a high calorie diet while at a high altitude.
- (m) Make sure to have all your meals even if you do not feel like it sometimes. Also make sure to consume dry fruits provided to you as they are the best means of keeping your strength and stamina.
- (n) Immediately change into dry shoes, socks or gloves when they get wet.

### **Don'ts.**

- (a) No medical discomfort should be hidden, however small it may seem.
- (b) Do not run or walk fast while climbing.
- (c) Above 12000 ft, do not climb more than about 2000 ft in a day.
- (d) Never rush or try to trek ahead of others in the team. This disturbs the balance of the team, and is dangerous as the trek leader will not be able to watch out for you. Additionally this will end up exhausting your energy and will

mean your acclimatisation will not happen leading to possible AMS as we gain height.

- (e) Do not walk empty stomach.
- (f) Never pluck flowers or throw trash and spoil natural beauty. Always make sure to pick up your trash after you leave the campsite.
- (g) Do not talk loudly or shout/play music loudly in areas where the snow or ice could get disturbed and cause an avalanche.
- (h) While going to relieve yourself in the night, do not stray far from the camp, and make sure you take a partner with you.
- (i) Avoid consuming alcohol, tobacco or sleeping pills at altitude. This hampers acclimatization.
- (j) Always remember 'Do not be a GAMA' in the land of 'LAMA'.

### **Do's and Don'ts in Mountains, Snow-Bound Areas and Glaciated Terrain While Camping**

#### **Do's.**

- (a) Select a site close to water and tree cover.
- (b) Living area should be away from avalanche prone slope.
- (c) Camping site should be large enough to accommodate helipad, radio operator detachment, group antenna etc.
- (d) Campsite should have good exposure to sunlight and be away from direct wind.
- (e) On glaciers camp should be established at a place where there are no chances of crevasses opening.
- (f) Natural shelter should be used extensively (wherever possible).
- (g) Shelter should be open from both ends to enable ventilation.
- (h) Shelter should be water proof and wind proof.

- (j) Cook house should be sited in the folds of the ground so that smoke/light can be concealed.
- (k) Camp should be sited in a good location, on higher ground, to guard against any eventuality.
- (l) Sentries should be placed all around the camp.
- (m) Camp should be cleaned daily.
- (n) If camping in a high altitude valley or meadon, make sure to dig a trench around individual tents to ensure good drainage in case of sudden thunderstorms.
- (o) Site latrines should be on the leeward side, away from cookhouse and living area.
- (p) Individual tent pegs should be secured with heavy boulders to prevent them getting blown off by high winds.
- (q) Leave camp clean before moving out.

### **Don'ts.**

- (a) Do not camp on low ground.
- (b) Do not camp at a place visible to avalanche prone slopes.
- (c) Do not camp too close to an ice fall or river/stream.
- (d) Cook house should not be located close to crevasse area as the heat produced may open crevasses.
- (e) Opening of the cook house should not face wind direction.
- (f) There should be no crevasse/stream running through the camp site.
- (g) Do not light a fire inside a snow shelter.
- (g) Waste material should not be disposed of close to camp site.
- (j) Do not litter the area and leave tell-a-tale marks.
- (k) Do not cut trees, vegetation or cause damage to the environment.

## **Do's and Don'ts in Mountains, Snow-Bound Areas and Glaciated Terrain : Physical Fitness**

It is extremely important for a climber to maintain his physical fitness under various environments and work conditions. Mountains are peculiar for their extreme hot and cold climate, rarefied atmosphere, fast winds and extremely rugged terrain. To operate in such areas with full potential, a climber has to remain physically fit and mentally robust. This chapter gives you certain points to be followed to keep physically fit.

### **Do's.**

- (a) Warm fluids should be consumed regularly.
- (b) Avoid excessive sweating.
- (c) Breathe through your nose and talk less while climbing.
- (d) Use sunglasses to avoid damage to eyes from the UV radiation of the sun.
- (e) Wash eyes regularly with clean water.
- (f) Keep yourself warm.
- (g) Wear loose fitting clothes so that clean air can circulate in your body.
- (h) Keep clothes dry from outside and inside.
- (j) Keep your head on height while sleeping – use pillows.
- (k) Exercise your face muscles by pulling them in all directions to avoid cold injuries.
- (l) While entering a shelter, brush your shoes and clothes of snow sticking to them.
- (m) Wear hand gloves and keep them dry.
- (n) Exercise all parts of the body and keep them clean and dry.

(o) Keep your head covered as maximum heat is lost by the body through the head (40%).

### **Don'ts.**

- (a) Do not smoke or consume liquor.
- (b) Do not lie on the floor or on warm surface.
- (c) Do not wear tight fitting clothes as they do not allow proper blood circulation.
- (d) Avoid wearing wet clothes.
- (e) Do not touch metal articles with naked skin.
- (f) Do not use dirty or torn socks.
- (g) Do not expose your body to cold weather, wind, wet clothes or humidity.
- (h) Do not rub your skin vigorously while taking a bath.
- (j) Do not overlook injuries, however small.
- (k) Do not sleep wearing wet clothes, socks or wet shoes.

### **Do's and Don'ts in Mountains, Snow-Bound Areas and Glaciated Terrain When Caught in a Storm**

There may be many occasions while moving from one camp to another, when climbers may be caught in a storm, in a group or alone. It is very important to keep a cool head and not fret under adverse conditions. This chapter empowers you with the knowledge of things to be done in such an eventuality.



### **Do's – When in a Group.**

- (a) Distribute responsibilities.
- (b) Plan and look for a way out.
- (c) Make a shelter, if possible. Look out for natural shelters, such as caves or a notch in the rocks.
- (d) Send out an SOS signal.
- (e) Locate own position on ground and map and try to head for higher ground.
- (f) Mark your trail.
- (g) Stay in a group.
- (h) Use rations and fuel judiciously.

### **Don'ts – When in a Group.**

- (a) Do not panic.
- (b) Take turns sleeping. At least a couple of members should stand guard and watch out for danger signs such as flash floods, avalanches or landslides
- (c) Stay together and do not spread the team out in a rushed attempt to get to lower ground. Stay on higher ground as far as possible.

### **Do's – When Alone.**

- (a) Control your panic.
- (b) Stay where you are.
- (c) Plan your next action deliberately.
- (d) If the way to the starting point is known, then turn back.
- (e) Keep yourself warm.
- (f) Use the rations and fuel judiciously.

- (g) Make a shelter, if possible.

### **Don'ts – When Alone.**

- (a) Do not fear because of loneliness.
- (b) Do not lose height.

### **Cost Inclusions/ Exclusions**

#### **Inclusions**

- Accommodation in a deluxe mountain lodge/hotel.
- High quality Camping arrangements

We believe that roughing it out doesn't mean sleeping in smelly sleeping bags, compromising on safety by using low quality equipment and having unappetizing meals. We focus on your safety, basic comfort and the overall experience while camping. Keeping this in mind, the following equipment is provided on the trek:

- 3/4 Man imported alpine tents/Indian good quality tents
- Fresh and clean Sleeping bags of very good quality or if you prefer your own sleeping bag you can get your own.
- Inflatable Camping Mattresses as against traditional foam mattresses
- Camping stools
- Mess Tent
- Toilet tent with portable toilet seats
- First Aid / Medical kit
- Number of Experienced Guides according to the group size. This will ensure high safety and more information and personal attention which are necessary to appreciate a trek. All our guides are professionally trained and have many years of relevant experience in guiding treks.

- All meals starting from dinner on the Day 1 till breakfast on the last day. A lot of emphasis is given to nutritional needs on the trek and a menu of vegetarian dishes is prepared accordingly. We have a system of providing 6 small meals along with tea/coffee in between on the trek.
- Porter/mule charges for carrying camping equipment & rations
- Forest entry charges, permits & camping fee
- First aid kit (our guides are certified in handling first aid situations)

### **Exclusions**

- Service Tax (@3.09%)
- Any meals/services not mentioned above.
- Personal expenses like tips, telephone calls, laundry, etc.
- Any costs arising out of unforeseen circumstances like landslides, road blocks, bad weather, etc.
- Insurance.