

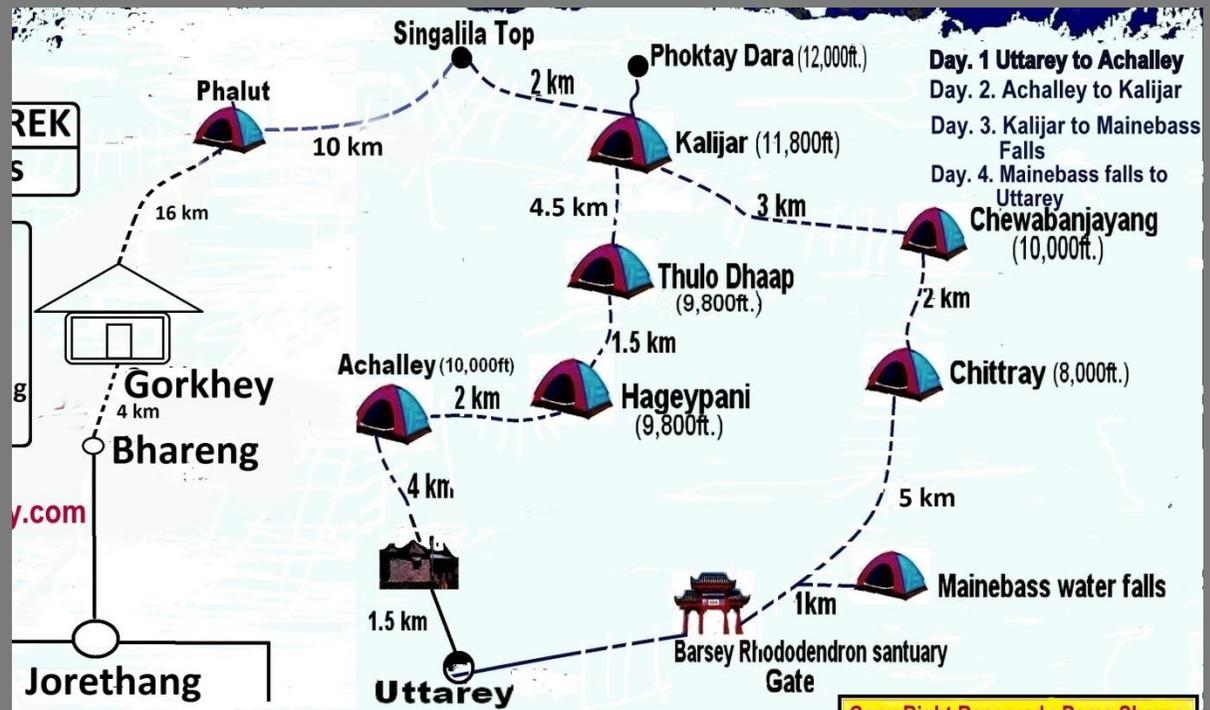
A photograph of a mountain range. The foreground shows dark, rocky slopes with some sparse vegetation. The middle ground is dominated by a thick layer of white clouds that fills the valley. In the background, a series of rugged, snow-covered mountain peaks rise against a clear blue sky. The lighting suggests a bright day, with the snow reflecting the light and creating strong shadows on the mountain's ridges.

South Col Expeditions

The Uttarey/Chiwabhanjan/Phoktey Dara Trek (6 days Bagdogra to Bagdogra)

Option to add a extra rest day at Rinchinpong after the trek

- This is one of the easy to moderate treks in Sikkim which covers the finest views of Kangchenjunga and the Everest group from Phoktey Dara and the Singalila ridge.
- This trek is a good post covid exercise when people have been housebound for many months as it does not go higher than 3600 metres and the walking is for 4-5 hours a day uphill and downhill. It is a spectacular walk in post monsoon weather with clear blue skies and white peaks and excellent in spring with rhododendron blossoms.
- The costs of this trek is Indian Rs 45,000/- Exclusions apply. For details please see page 5.



Trip Highlights



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- A walk to the high view point of Phoktey Dara and Singalila between Sikkim on one side and Nepal on the other
- Views of four 8000 metre peaks from Phoktey Dara – Everest, Kangchenjunga, Lhotse and Makalu.
- Verdant forests of the Eastern Himalaya rich in bird life.
- Moderate walking in spring weather with rhododendron blossoms.
- A loop trek not crossing 12,000 feet so moderate in nature with camping spots along the way.

Who should join this trek?



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A good choice for both first timers and experienced trekkers - moderate level of fitness required.

- 1) Walking times: average 4-5 hours walking per day
- 2) Altitude: upto 3600m
- 3) Terrain: mostly following well travelled trails and paved paths and steps.
- 4 Remoteness: the trek is in a remote mountain area and mobile phones will not work other than at Uttarey.
- 5) This is a full support camping trek with tents no lodges are available.

The Uttarey/Chiwabhanjan/Phoktey Dara Trek Itinerary

- Day 01 - Bagdogra to Rinchinpong by vehicle (5-6 hours)
- We stop for the night at Rinchinpong instead of Uttarey as there are better resorts in Rinchinpong with great mountain views.
- Day 02: Rinchinpong to Uttarey 2010m by vehicle 75 min and then trek to Chittray 2680m 4 hours
- The trail leaves the village of Uttarey and begins a pleasant steady uphill climb through a forested path. We soon pass cardamom forests which are an important cash crop in Sikkim and then we enter the rhododendron zone. In about 4 hours steady climbing we reach a clearing in Chittray which is our camping spot for the night.
- Day 03: Chittray to Chiwabhanjan 3000m 2 hours to Kalijhar 3580m 3 hours
- The next day is a the day for views we now leave the valley and start moving into the higher country. At Chiwabhanjan we come to the border with Nepal - the ridge then climbs higher and we camp at Kalijhar for the night. If the weather is clear we can go to Phoktey Dara for the magnificent sunset view.
- Day 04 Kalijhar to Achaley 2950m 5 hours
- After the great views at Phoktey Dara we descend to steadily in around 2.5 to 3 hours to Tholo dhap and then in another hour drop further to Hageypani from here Achaley in another hour in a pleasant meadow.
- Day 05 Achaley to Uttarey 4 hours and drive to back to Rinchinpong
- This day is the last day of the trek and loses altitude steadily all the way down. We should reach Uttarey by lunch and after a quick lunch we drive back to our resort at Rinchinpong 1 hour for a hot shower and good dinner.
- Day 06 We leave Rinchinpong in the morning depending on our flight time at Bagdogra.
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The Uttarey/Chiwabhanjan/Phoktey Dara Trek Costs 2021

- **For Indian Nationals Indian Rs 45,000 /- including taxes**
- The cost is per person for Bagdogra to Bagdogra (6 days) as per the itinerary given.
- Costs given above are at current rates and may change without notice. Changes if any will be notified 3 months before the trek.

Costs include

- All necessary permits and Kangchendzonga National Park permits as needed in Sikkim.
- **Two nights hotel in a good resort in Rinchinpong is covered.**
- At Rinchinpong lunch is not included.
- **All meals on the trek are covered.**
- **Full camping on the trek is covered.**
- Cost of porters/guides yaks and other support staff on the trek is covered. Please note that porters will carry one duffel bag or backpack not exceeding 12 kgs in weight for each trekker comprising of personal items, clothing, sleeping bag etc.

Costs not included

- Flight Cost/Train costs to reach Bagdogra/New Jalpaiguri
- Lunch en route Bagdogra to Rinchinpong is not covered.
- Client travel and medical insurance of any kind. Emergency evacuation costs if needed.
- Personal clothing and equipment; sleeping bag; down/ goretex jacket, medicines for personal use etc.
- Air fare from residence country to India and back
- Cost of covid negative test if needed and any other test like rapid antigen test in Sikkim if required.
- Tips to porters and guide at the end of trek - we will give a guideline on this before the trek.

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Peaks from Phoktey Dara



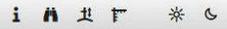
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27°25'04"N 88°03'08"E



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15:07
Oct 13
2020

Why trek to Uttarey/Chiwabhanjan/Phoktey Dara with South Col?



- South Col is a small, personalized firm specializing in treks in the Himalayan region. **Sujoy is one of the few trekkers to have visited the region way back in 1986! Our trek leaders have a huge experience with Sikkim and this trek.**
- We are keenly aware of the fragility of environment and cultures in which we trek and recognize our responsibility in maintaining them. "Take pictures, leave only foot prints" is our motto.
- Trekkers get personalized attention both in the planning stage as well as during the trek itself and put a lot of emphasis on the safety of our team.
- Support team of guides and porters as needed are personally supervised by the trek leader to ensure that the clients are comfortable and well looked after.

Special Note on Camping

- The Uttarey/Chiwabhanjan/Phoktey Dara trek is a full support camping trek with porters, guide, cook, helpers and yaks as needed.
- It is not a lodge or tea house trek.
- Tents with mattresses will be provided every night. Quilts and blankets will not be possible. You will need a warm sleeping bag at least three seasons.
- We will have a team of one cook and helpers who will cook all meals. Food will be basic like porridge, cornflakes, some eggs, chapattis, rice, dal, vegetables etc. All food will be carried from Uttarey. Three meals with morning and evening tea will be provided.
- Our bags and luggage will be carried by porters or yaks.
- **Toilets will not be available on the trail.** We will provide toilet tents.



The Uttarey/Chiwabhanjan/Phoktey Dara Trek FAQ #1

How fit do I have to be to do a trek? Whilst you do not need to be super-fit, you need to be fit enough to comfortably walk for 5-6 hours per day in the mountains on reasonable trails. You will definitely need to walk for around an hour at least every day to get fit. If you can spend some time in the gym it would help. Walking uphill/stairs etc also helps a great deal.

What is a typical group? Will I fit in? Groups range in size from 6 up to 12, and typically comprise a range of nationalities and experience. So far, all of our groups have got along very well. One of the attractions of such a trip is the chance to meet people with different backgrounds and personalities.

Do I need to buy special equipment? Usually our clients simply bring their existing clothing and equipment. However, if you do not have an item on our equipment list you will have to buy or borrow this.. Please check the equipment list which we will send out.

I am a single trekker. How does this work? Normally single trekkers have no problems fitting in with a group. Normally single trekkers share rooms or tents with other trekkers of the same sex, but if we have an odd-number we ensure that a room or tent is organized accordingly.

Will I be able to deal with the high altitude? Our itineraries are designed so that our clients ascend at a sensible and safe rate. The effects of altitude are felt by everyone, even the guides and Sherpas, but most people find that gentle acclimatization allows them to reach their high point without any problems. We will be monitoring this closely on the trek and in the event of any problems we will ensure that there is no compromise on safety. For details on AMS visit

http://www.ismmed.org/np_altitude_tutorial.htm#prevention



The Uttarey/Chiwabhanjan/Phoktey Dara Trek FAQ #2

Where do we stay on the trek? Tents are provided with mattress on this trek. You need to bring your own sleeping bag.

Where do we eat our meals? As this is a camping trek meals will be cooked by our crew and served at camp. Lunch will be usually given packed in the morning to have during the day. You are encouraged to bring chocolates, nuts, energy bars etc with you.

Where do we get water during the trip? It is our suggestion that in order to save money, trekkers carry iodine tablets or lugols solution or chlorine with them so that they can purify the water every day.

What type of shoes or boots should I wear? The proper foot wear depends on the trek. The Phoktey Dara trek should be done in boots with firm ankle support. Having said that you will find locals and porters trekking in sneakers! Shoes and boots are best purchased before your arrival for the trek with proper break in.

What will the weather be like? October November is the post monsoon season so we expect clear sunny days and cold nights. Temperatures in the day can range between 15 and 20 degrees Celsius while nights would be between 0 and 6 celsius. Higher up the temperatures will be less and being autumn snow is not likely though a freak snow storm cannot be ruled out!

How should I give my gear to the porter? Ideally the gear should be given to the porter in a duffle bag locked and this will be returned to the client in the evening. As you may not be able to access the duffle bag during the day please carry the essentials like water, jacket, camera, sweets etc in your daypack.

Terms and Conditions #1

CANCELLATION POLICY

- The cancellation policy and refunds available are given below:
- 0-7 days before the start of the trek =75%
- 8 -15 days before the start of the trek = 50%
- 16-30 days before the start of the trek = 35%
- 31-45 days before the start of the trek = 30%
- 46 days and above = 20%



IN CASE OF LEAVING THE GROUP

- If due to illness or any other reason a client has to leave the group and go down or wait at a lodge for the group to pick him/her up on the way back, all expenses including lodging, fooding and any porter/guide related expenses if any are to be borne by the individual client over and above the trek fees paid for the trek. There are also no refunds for leaving a trek before completion.

HIRING OF PONIES ETC

- In the eventuality of a client needed the services of a pony to come down to lower altitudes, the cost of hiring the pony will be paid by the client.

EVACUATION BY HELICOPTER

- In the eventuality of not being covered by emergency helicopter evacuation insurance and an evacuation is considered necessary, the cost of the evacuation will be paid by the client in advance to the helicopter company/travel agent etc as deemed necessary.

Terms and Conditions #2

CANCELLATION OF LUKLA FLIGHTS (IF YOU ARE GOING TO THE EVEREST REGION)

- In case the Kathmandu to Lukla flight is cancelled, the additional cost for hotel accommodation in Kathmandu is to be paid by the client over and above the contracted days accommodation provided.
- In case the Lukla to Kathmandu flight is cancelled, the client has the following options:
- Continue to remain in Lukla at the client's cost (both fooding and accommodation) and try for a flight the next day or day after.
- Depart from Lukla if possible using the services of a helicopter usually US \$ 500per person. In this case the one way flight cancellation charges will be refunded to the client.

LODGES/CAMPING SITES ON THE TREK

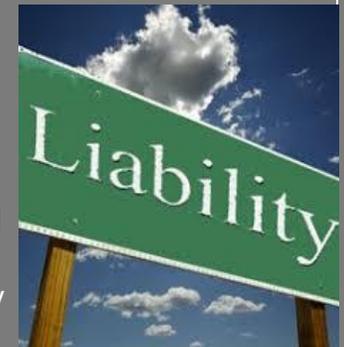
- The choice of lodges/camping sites to be used on the trek will be decided by South Col and clients will have to stay at these designated lodges/camps. Clients are not permitted to choose their own lodges on the route.

TREK ROUTE

- The trek route and day wise schedule will be fixed by South Col and will have to be followed by the client.

RISKS AND LIABILITY

- The trek is in a remote mountain area and has certain additional dangers and risks, some of which include: physical exertion for which the client should be prepared; weather extremes subject to sudden and unexpected changes; remoteness from normal medical services; evacuation difficulties.
- In the event of injury or illness South Col Expeditions (Sujoy Das) or its Staff can, at the clients cost arrange any medical treatment and emergency evacuation service as it or they deem necessary for the health and safety of the client.



South Col Founder Profile

Sujoy Das has been trekking and photographing in the Himalayas for more than thirty five years.

His notable treks include: Winter ascent of Kala Pattar peak (Everest region) Dec 2003; Everest Base Camp 18,500 feet (2001); Thorung-la pass/Annapurna Circuit 17,746 feet (2000); Annapurna Base Camp 14,300 feet (1999); Gokyo Ri peak Everest region 18,275 feet (1998); Rupkund Lake, Garhwal 16,200 feet (1996); Kangchendzonga Base Camp North and Green Lakes 16,875 feet (1987); Dorji La peak North Sikkim 18,644 feet (1986); crossing of Lhonak-la pass North Sikkim (1987).

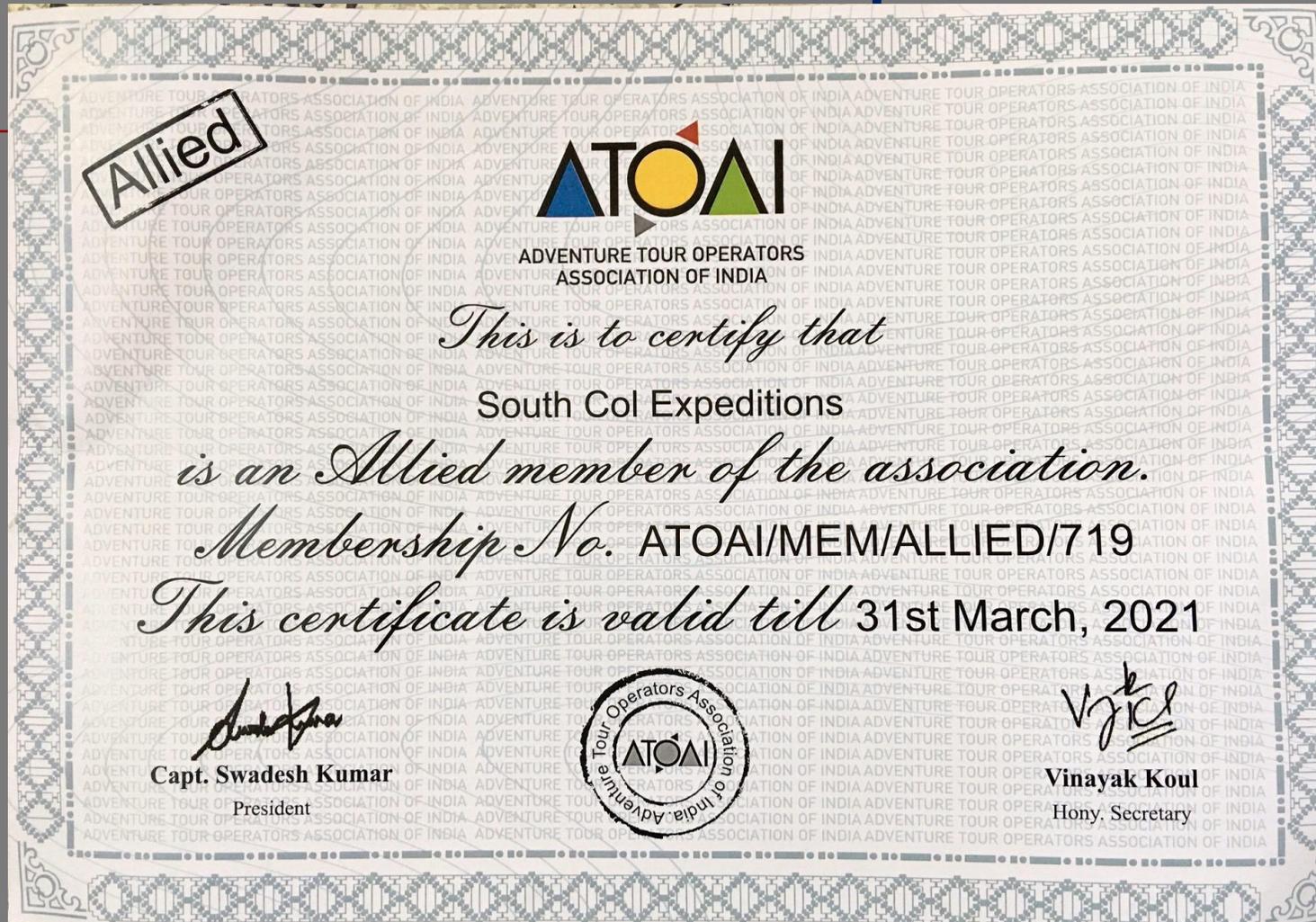
He has visited the Annapurna region a dozen times including three visits to the Base Camp and the entire circuit of Annapurna. He has trekked in the Everest region more than fifteen times including the winter of 2003-04. In the Eastern Himalaya he has trekked the Singalila ridge of Sandakphu and Phalut six times and made four visits to the alp of Dzongri in West Sikkim. In September 2009 he trekked across seven passes in Ladakh from the monastery of Lamayuru to Padum in Zaskar.

He has been an invited speaker at the Mussoorie Mountain Festival 2017 and Mountain Echoes - the Bhutan Literary Festival 2019.

He is the joint author and photographer of a number of books like Sikkim- A Travellers Guide, Nepal Himalaya - A Journey Through Time, Everest Reflections on the Solukhumbu, Lonely Planet - Nepal for the Indian Traveller. His essays and photographs have been published in books and magazines worldwide. To view his photographs of the Himalaya please visit www.sujoydas.com. He can be contacted at sujoyrdas@gmail.com



Membership



Om Mani Peme Hung

