K2 and Concordia

Trip Code: K2

Version:

WALK & TREK	GUIDED GROUP	CHALLENGING
		8



HIGHLIGHTS

- Spectacular views of Broad Peak, Gasherbrum and K2 from Concordia
- Trek past the dramatic towers of Trango, Cathedral and Lobsang
- Visit K2 Basecamp (optional) and overnight at Broad Peak Basecamp
- Western leader plus local guide and full trek support

AT A GLANCE

- 14 days trekking
- Max altitude - 4850 metres (optional to 5100m)
- Join at Islamabad

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

KE have been trekking in the Karakoram Mountains of Pakistan since 1984. It is the place where our story began and it has a special place in our hearts. The trek to Concordia at the foot of K2 (8611m) the second highest peak on Earth is an absolute classic. It was the very first KE trek and is arguably still the best. KE groups always receive a fantastic welcome from our friends in Baltistan. The 'wild west' town of Skardu is our point of access for the Karakoram Mountains and from here we drive in rugged 4WD vehicles via the village of Askole, the highest village en-route to K2, to begin our trekking adventure.

Trekking into the heart of the Karakoram, we see such famous peaks as the Trango Towers, the Cathedral group and mighty Masherbrum (first designated K1 by the survey of India because it appeared to be the highest peak in the Karakoram). After several days of trekking on and beside the Baltoro Glacier, we reach the junction of glaciers known as Concordia, the place that US adventurer Galen Rowell aptly named the 'Throne Room of the Mountain Gods'. Nowhere else on earth can you stand so close to so many of the world's highest peaks including Broad Peak (8047m), Gasherbrum (8080m) and the stupendous south face of K2 (8611m). After a night at Concordia, we will then move our camp up to Broad Peak Basecamp (4850m) and spend a night there, which gives those who are keen to visit K2 Basecamp the best possible chance of doing so. Anyone choosing to go no further than Broad Peak Basecamp will still enjoy arguably the best views of K2 and of the surrounding mountains. Escorted by a KE Western leader and supported by a local guide and trek crew drawn from the local Baltistan people, this is adventure trekking at its finest. This universally acclaimed Karakoram trek is well within the capabilities of experienced hill-walkers.

View our full range of adventure holidays in Pakistan.

Is this holiday for you?

This almost legendary walk up Concordia is within the capabilities of any reasonably fit person with previous trekking or hiking experience. There are some differences to more popular trekking regions of the Greater Himalaya such as Nepal. In the Karakoram the terrain is generally more rugged underfoot, there are no tea houses or lodges on the route and no villages or permanent habitation above Askole. The altitude 'steps' are generally easier in the Karakoram mountains than in Nepal since we are ascending vast glaciated valleys (in fact the largest glaciers in the world outside of the polar regions are in the Karakoram). Although we spend a fair amount of time on the glacier, we are rarely walking on ice and crampons are not required as the trail is almost entirely on the stones and rubble that have melted out from the glacier. We will travel as a self-supporting group with a Western leader and a local trek crew and this in itself can be a highly rewarding experience. We will usually walk for between 6 and 8

hours each day, covering a distance of around 15 kilometres on average. No mountaineering skills or specialist equipment are required for this trek but a sense of adventure and a willingness to adapt to the needs of a self-supporting group are essential items to bring with you!

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- An experienced KE Western leader
- Islamabad Airport transfers for international flights on Day 1 and Day 21
- Internal flights and associated airport transfers
- All land transport involved in the itinerary
- All accommodation as described in the trip dossier
- All meals throughout the holiday
- Full trekking service including food and all equipment (excluding personal equipment)

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Pakistan Visa
- Tips for local guides and support staff
- Guided Islamabad sightseeing
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc
- PLEASE NOTE: an airport departure tax of Rs500 is sometimes payable.

Important Notice

Travel on the Karakoram Highway

We encourage you to read the up to date Travel Advice on the FCDO website. Currently, the FCDO warns against travel on the Karakoram Highway (KKH) between Mansehra and Chilas.

Flying both ways between Islamabad and Skardu, we avoid travelling on this road.

However, when flights are cancelled, we sometimes have to make this journey (in either direction) by road and in this case we take the N-15 National Highway across the Babusar Pass, which avoids the proscribed section of the KKH.

Only in the rare case of a flight being cancelled AND the Babusar Pass road being closed, would we be obliged to travel on the above-mentioned section of the KKH. In this event your insurance cover may be compromised.

We have been taking groups to Pakistan for 40 years and have never had any problems on this road. In actuality, the journey along the Karakoram Highway is spectacularly scenic and an epic experience which has been enjoyed by hundreds of KE clients.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Islamabad.

To guarantee access to your room on arrival earlier than mid to late morning, you have the extra-cost option of booking an additional night. The usual procedure is for the group to relax in the hotel public areas until the rooms are available.

Transfers are provided from/to Islamabad Airport for all clients arriving on Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary and departing on the last day of the Land Only itinerary.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are included in the holiday price from arrival on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 19.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

Drinking Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a Water-To-Go bottle) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

On trek, the food is a mixture of local and international dishes, made from ingredients mostly purchased in Pakistan and cooked by our highly trained trek cooks. Breakfasts consist of cereal, muesli or porridge, eggs, bread or chapatti, tea and coffee. Lunches are a picnic from a choice of canned fish, tinned meats, cheese, pickles, pate, and crackers or chapattis, sometimes accompanied by hot soup and noodles, and finished off with tea or coffee. Dinner taken in a group 'mess' tent, is a three course meal. We do routinely cater for vegetarians but you must inform us if you wish your diet to be exclusively vegetarian. Drinking water which has been treated with iodine is provided by the trek kitchen during breakfast, at the lunch stop and while in camp. We use spring water wherever possible but on some days we have no choice except to use glacial melt which may contain silt. Conventional filters do not work well with glacial silt and in camp the kitchen will use a large water barrel which allows the silt to settle away. You should bring a little bicarbonate of soda if you find the taste of iodine unpalatable. Trail-mix and snacks will be provided.

Accommodation

During this trip the group will spend a total of 3 nights in Islamabad at a good standard hotel. The group will also have 2 nights in a tourist class hotel in Skardu. Accommodation at each of these hotels is twin-sharing with en-suite facilities. Whilst on trek there will be a total of 13 nights spent camping in 2-person tents. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired with another single client of the same sex. It is possible to hire a single tent while on trek for an additional cost. Please note single tent hire does not include single rooms in hotels. For the 5 hotel nights, single rooms are available for a supplementary cost. Additional hotel nights in Islamabad are also available. For hotel prices and single supplement costs please refer to the dates and prices page of the trip on our website. Hotels are subject to availability and prices may vary.

Internal flights

Skardu Flights

Skardu is a weather-dependent airport. Since the valley is completely surrounded by high mountains, planes can only land here in good visibility and this means flights to and from Skardu are never guaranteed. The planes do fly more often than not, but cancellations can and do occur and in these circumstances we will travel by road. If we did not do this groups would risk being stranded in Islamabad and you should beware of companies that say they will only fly to Skardu as this may mean you have no possibility of trekking. See our 'Important Note' about travel on the Karakoram Highway for more details.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by an experienced KE Western leader. During the trek the group will be accompanied by a full support crew, including a local guide, cook and kitchen crew, as well as porters to carry all equipment and personal trek bags. This crew is drawn from local villagers who depend on working for trekking groups to supplement their subsistance income. Most of the crew will have supported KE groups many times before, or their fathers and even grand-fathers will have. Travellling with these friendly and hardy people is a major part of the experience of Karakoram trekking.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to very high altitude. During the course of your trip you will be spending at least one night above 4000 metres and/or trekking to 5000 metres or above. This is not something that you should worry about; the human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of altitudes, but it is important that we follow some simple rules in order to acclimatise successfully. Before coming on this holiday you should read the advice on trekking at high altitude. Unless you have previous experience of trekking above 4000 metres you should consult one of our trekking experts before embarking on this holiday. On this trip we carry a portable altitude chamber (PAC-bag) and/or bottled oxygen for use in emergencies.

Spending Money

Approximately £200 (or equivalent in US dollars, Euros etc.) changed into local currency should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses, including porter and trek crew tips. You will also pay directly for guided sightseeing in in Islamabad if this works out for your group and you choose to take part in the tour. The cost of this will be approximately 50 US dollars for a half-day tour. Note that money for tips should be changed into local currency (denominations of 500 rupees or smaller only) before you leave Islamabad. Money can be changed at a reasonable rate at the airport or at authorised money changers. Since you will be changing the majority of your spending money into local currency soon after your arrival, we recommend that you take it in cash, taking care that all notes are new, clean and in good condition. US dollars, Sterling and Euros can readily be exchanged at the airport. US dollars will give you more flexibility to exchange in smaller towns or in an emergency. Credit cards can be used to purchase many goods in Islamabad or Skardu and are particularly useful for more expensive items such as carpets. Withdrawing cash from an ATM machine may prove to be impossible anywhere on this trip.

Guidance on Tipping

It is usual to tip the members of your trek crew, if you are happy with the services provided. As a guide, we recommend that each group member contributes around £130 (in rupees) to these tips - although the amount you give is entirely up to you Towards the end of the trek, the trip leader will help the group to determine an appropriate level of tipping for each crew member, and this is most usually done as a group ‘thank-you’ with ceremony on the final day of trekking.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, which should be a soft and sturdy duffel bag and a daypack. Your bag on trek will be carried by porters. The packed weight of your bag whilst trekking including your sleeping bag and camping mattress should be no more than 12.5 kgs. (27 pounds). You should note that this allowance which is governed by maximum porter loads, is slightly less than allowances for treks in India and Nepal and is quite strictly adhered to. It is possible to leave items not required on trek at the group hotel in Islamabad and also in Skardu.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the ‘Dates and Prices’ table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

All British passport holders are required to obtain a visa for entry into Pakistan. Download our Pakistan Visa Information document for full details of how to apply.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on a trekking holiday getting some additional exercise. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. For this trip you need to be aerobically fit and also comfortable with walking on a variety of terrain including loose scree and boulders for between 4 and 7 hours on most days. We suggest that you adopt a weekly exercise regime leading up to your trip. Regular hiking in hill country is the best training but running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardio vascular fitness and stamina. Before departure, we recommend that you undertake a number of long walks in hilly country.

Climate

From mid June to the end of August, we can expect to encounter temperatures as high as 30°C at Skardu and 25°C at Askole (at 3000m). During the day it will remain pleasantly warm (unless there is cloud cover) until we reach Concordia by which time daytime temperatures will be down to single figures. In June we may encounter snow on the upper part of the Baltoro Glacier, but this has usually melted by July. However, snow can fall at Concordia even in August. At any time of the season the night-time temperatures will be considerably lower usually falling to freezing levels once we are above Paiju and at Concordia, overnight temperatures can drop as low as minus 10°C. During the September departures we can expect temperatures just a few degrees lower than the above. The Karakoram Mountains are sheltered from the full effects of the monsoon which means summer is the best season for trekking and climbing here with predominantly clear skies. However, weather in mountainous areas is notoriously difficult to predict, and short-lived storms can occur at any time of the year.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Trekking in the Karakoram. Bart Jordans. Cicerone
- Trekking in Pakistan. Isobel Shaw.
- Karakoram Highway. King.
- Top Treks of the World. Steve Razzetti.
- Throne Room of the Mountain Gods. Galen Rowell.
- K2 Triumph and Tragedy. Jim Curran.

Maps

TerraQuest: Karakoram. 1 : 175,000

Available from Stanfords - stanfords.co.uk - £14.99

This is the best map for all of KE's current Karakoram treks. Covers the central part of the Karakoram Range on a waterproof and tear-resistant, double-sided map, with coverage extending from Gilgit and the Karakoram Highway to the peaks of K2 and Gasherbrum. The map is presented in a special format, handy for conveniently viewing just small sections of it at one time.

Private Groups Information

Make this KE Adventure holiday your own!

- Do our normal group departure dates not fit?
- Would you prefer to travel with just friends and/or family?
- Are you looking to organise a trip for your local walking, biking or mountaineering club?

It's really easy to make a trip your own. Simply select from our full range of adventure holidays and choose the dates that work for you and your group.

We are experts in creating holidays for groups of friends, families, charities and clubs. Our personal service means you'll be fully involved as we make the arrangements for your perfect adventure holiday.

Independence with Security

Travelling as a KE Private Group allows you more flexibility and choice, but still with the peace of mind that everything is pre-planned and arranged for your group by a reputable adventure travel company.

To take your first step to an amazing adventure with your friends and family complete the private group enquiry form, or call our **Sales Experts on: 017687 73966**

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. You do not have to bring everything on the list and you should use your own experience and judgement, but we ask you to ensure you have the items on the mandatory list. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum. The packed weight of your bag whilst trekking including your sleeping bag and mattress should be no more than 12.5 kgs. This limit which is set by the porters is strictly enforced

and bags will be weighed prior to setting off on trek. Anything not required on the trek can be left at the group hotel in Islamabad and also in Skardu.

When selecting clothing for this holiday, please be culturally sensitive. Tight fitting or revealing clothing is not appropriate. Shorts and tee shirts can be worn but only once we are above the last temporary habitations of the valley.

You must bring the following items:

- Hiking boots (see notes)
- Sports sandals or old trainers (for river crossings)
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- Warm jacket (e.g. down)
- Scarf or buff
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Gloves or mittens
- Daypack 30 to 40 litres
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottles 1 litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)

Water purification tablets

- Sleeping bag (comfort rated -15°C)
- Thermarest or similar sleeping mat
- Basic First Aid Kit including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), altitude (Diamox), painkillers, plasters, blister treatment, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).
- 2x small padlocks (one for left luggage and one for trek bag)

Packing checklist:

- Trainers for camp use
- Spare laces
- Trekking trousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer shirts
- Shirts or T-shirts
- Thermal underwear
- Wash kit including soap and flannel (water is available at most camps for washing and is more eco-friendly that wet-wipes)
- Small towel and small cloth (the latter for wiping out dusty tents)
- Antibacterial handwash
- Trekking poles (recommended)
- Gaiters (optional)

- Microspikes (Kahtoola) or similar footwear traction (see notes)
- Insect repellant
- Washbag and toiletries
- Sleeping bag liner
- Travel clothes
- Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Camera
- Dry bags(s) for daypack/kitbag contents (to ensure they keep dry)

Notes:

We suggest that you take a pair of trekking poles which can be helpful on the rough terrain encountered on and off the glacier.

The rugged underfoot conditions are also really hard on boots and it is important that you take walking boots that are in good condition and not nearing the end of their shelf-life.

Kahtoola Microspikes or similar footwear traction can provide extra security when walking on sections of dry glacier.

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary starting at the hotel in Islamabad. Transfers are provided from/to Islamabad Airport for all clients arriving on Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary and departing on the last day of the Land Only itinerary.

Flight Inclusive Information

Limited seats are available at the advertised flight price, please book as early as you can. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures and/or upgrades, we will provide you with an alternative quote. It is likely that flight payment will be in advance of your final holiday balance. Booking a flight inclusive package means you will benefit from full financial protection, eases your holiday planning, and leaves us to deal with airlines and schedule changes. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Islamabad. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the morning, arriving in the early morning of the following day (Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary). Return flights will depart Islamabad usually in the morning of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later the same day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

We are by far UK's leading operator of treks in Pakistan. Leading groups to this part of the world since 1984, working with the same expert Pakistani local guides, we are rightly considered one of the pioneers of adventurous trekking in the Karakoram (it's what the 'K' in KE Adventure stands for!)

Please Note This document was downloaded on 11/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change