Overview

Mani Rimdu Festival is celebrated at Tengboche, Thame and Chiwong Monastery of Solukhumbu Nepal. This is a sacred ceremonies and series of events of empowerment. It is a sequence of nineteen days celebration, which concludes with three days public festival. Sherpa get time to gather and celebrate this festival with monastic community. Lamas and Sherpa gather at the monastery for five days for the welfare of the world. Demons are quelled and the virtuous are rewarded. The monks wear elaborate mask, costumes? and through a series ritualistic Lama dances, dramatize the triumph of Buddhism over Bon. The main first days of festival involves prayers, second day for colorful lama dancing, they wear brocade gown and wonderfully painted papier-mâché masks. Last day is for some humorous dances and chanting prayers. Hundred of local people and foreign tourist attend the performance. This trek rewards you to see the real and ideal culture of Sherpa people and great Himalayan picturesque views.

When is Mani Rimdu for the year 2019?

The date of the Mani Rimdu festival is fixed according to the Tibetan Lunar calendar. The head lama at the Tyangboche Monastery announces the dates. In Tengboche the Mani Rimdu is performed in the 9th Tibetan month which usually falls in October or November full-moon. Mani Rimdu Festival date for the year 2019 is celebrating on 12th, 13th and 14th November 2019.

Mani Ramdu is divided into six Preparations:

Construction of the Sand Mandala

Sand mandala is constructed step by step. Colored sand is used to build complicated and symbolic design. Sand mandala takes many days to complete. Defensive blade symbolizing deities are placed around the Mandala. The bowl of Mani Rilwu pills (spiritual medicine) is placed above the center. The Mandala symbolizes the palace of Garwang Thoze Chenpo (Lord of the Dance). Creation of the Buddha of Kindness, the main idol of Mani Rimdu. The mantra "OM AH HUNG RHI, OM MANI PADME HUMG? is repeated thousands of times by the monks during the weeks of ceremony before the public festival. During meditation, they imagine kindness flowing in the form of the mantra, into the Mandala and the Mani Rilwu pills. Kindness then releases out from the Mandala, blessing all those who attend the Mani Rimdu festival.

Wong (The Empowerment)

The Wong is the opening day of public ceremony. It’s performed on the full moon day, of the tenth month in the Tibetan lunar calendar. The sacred Mani Rilwu (sacred or blessed pills) and Tshereel (pills for long life), are given to everyone attending.

Chham (The Mask Dances)
The dances take place on the 2nd day of Mani Rimdu. Symbolic demons are conquered, chase away, or transformed to Protectors of Dharma. As the theme of the dance positive forces fight with those of disorder through the dances. The dances convey Buddhist teaching on many levels from the simplest to the most philosophical. During the dance the monks are believed to become divine being. The dances are only performed during Mani Rimdu because they are considered to be very Sacred, and not for ordinary entertainment.

Ser-Kyem

Ser-Kyem is most commonly used to make tea offerings to Dharma guards such as Mahakala. It has two pieces: a larger raised dish-shaped bowl and a smaller raised offering bowl. The smaller is placed in an upright position in the larger dish when the offering is being made. When not in use, the smaller offering bowl is placed upside down in the larger bowl. The food offerings can also be placed in the larger dish when in use. This offering of spiritual nectar is made in many ceremonies. The six dancers represent Ngag-pa, Tantric magicians.

They make offerings of alcohol from silver vessels, and small tormas, to the Lama, Yidam, Khandro, and Shi-Dak (the Earth deities). A Buddhist consultant takes refuge in the Lama (spiritual guide), Yidam (personal deity) and Khandro (wisdom dakini). A central theme in Tibetan Buddhist practice is to make offerings to these beings, so that they will help with the virtuous actions which lead to Buddhahood.

The Fire Puja (Jinsak)

The Fire Puja is performed in the yard the day after the dances. The Fire Puja is an offering to Agni (the god of fire), and to the Gods of the mandala - to allay all harm in the world. The harm is visualized as dissolving into the grain and butter is burned. Afterwards, the sand mandala in the temple is pull to pieces, and the sand is given as an offering to the serpent gods (Nagas).

Chhingpa

The next dance portrays the Four Protecting Ghings, defending the Buddhist faith against attack by demons. Shining paper masks hide the faces of the dancers, each a different color and each displaying a constant smile. The dancers’ hops are rhythmically accompanied by the beating of cymbals. The dancers charge at children in the audience and scare them as for fun.

The Dakini dance is performed genially. Slow motion dance steps, keeping perfect time with the soft tinkle and slow beat of bells and drums is performed by five young priests. The dancers are without masks, and portray female spiritual figures; the partners of Padmasambhava. It is believed that they come from his pure land of Shangdok Palri where they live within his mandala. They herald the imminent arrival of Guru Rinpoche at
the Mani Rimdu. Two of the Ghing are male, and carry cymbals, while the two females carry drums. The males represent skillful means and the female represent wisdom; these two aspects of the path. The torma is made from barley flour and decorated with colored butter. It begins by symbolizing the body of the deity, and by the end of the ceremony, symbolizes enlightenment itself. It stands in the front of the mandala on its own shrine, at the very heart of the temple.

This trek can be combined with Everest Base Camp Trek, Everest Panorama Trek aka Everest View Trek, Gokyo and Everest Base Camp trek or any Everest Region Trekking.

**Itinerary Details**

**Day 01 : Arrival in Kathmandu.**

Join Kathmandu at TIA (Tribhuvan International Airport) and you will be received at the airport by our representative. Please make sure that you look for Wilderness Excursion sign outside the terminal and escort to Hotel by car or as per group size. Welcome drink and after you check into the hotel there will be a group briefing with your tour leader. He will discuss the trek details and co-ordinate any last minute arrangements. Stay overnight at Hotel.

**Day 02 : Free day in Kathmandu, preparation or sightseeing**

Today; it is free day in Kathmandu. You can do preparation of walk to the local market or visit ancient old temples and monument sites in Kathmandu. If you would like us to arrange a guided tour, after breakfast in the hotel, Drive to Swayambhunath Stupa which is very close form the centre of Kathmandu. It takes some minutes to be there. This Temple is also known as Monkey Temple which is considered to be self made Stupa. Then visit to Boudhanath Stupa: the biggest stupa in Nepal and one of the bigger stupa in the world. You can basically experience Tibetan Buddhism, culture and way of life in Boudhanath Area. Boudhanath area is the authentic place to buy Tibetan stuffs. Again you will be visit Pashupatinath Temple and it is one of the most sacred temples in the entire Hindu world. It is a sacred place where Hindus come to die and to be cremated. The temple of Pashupatinath is a large double roofed, gilt pagoda, decorated with brass, the gateway is plated with silver. There are images of Shiva along with other statues, shrines and temples dedicated to other deities in the complex. A circuit of the Pashupati area takes visitors past a sixth-century statue of the Buddha, an eight-century statue of Brahma the creator and numerous other temples. There are rows of Shiva shrines and Hindu pilgrims from all over south Asia offering ceremonies to worship Shiva, the Lord of Destruction. Stay overnight at Hotel in Kathmandu.

**Day 03 : Take flight to Lukla and walk to Phakding or Monju. 3-4 hours.**

After 45 minutes scenic flight from Kathmandu to Lukla (2800m) and will have breakfast and then continue our journey passing through many Buddhist monuments during the trail and finally we reach in Phakding which takes about 3 hours. We will have lunch there.
Evening time, we go for village tour with our guide. Overnight in Lodge.

**Day 04 : Walk to Namche Bazaar (3440m), 5-7 hours.**

In the morning after breakfast we begin from hotel and we reach in Monjo after 1.5 hours walk passing many suspension bridges with good view of Mt. Thamserku and Kusum Kangaru. We should entry our permit and will have lunch in Jorsalle. Then we start to climb steep up slowly passing high suspension bridge till Namche Bazar which takes about two and half hours. We have a great view of Khwangde Range and Thamserku. Overnight in Lodge at Namche Bazaar.

**Day 05 : Rest and acclimatization day at Namche Bazaar**

Today, we will hike to Everest view hotel for panoramic and spectacular view of mountains. It takes 2 hours to reach there and enjoy the view of the mountains. Then we climb down to Khumjun village for the visit monastery and Khumjun Hillary School. It takes about 1 hour. We can see Skull of Yeti inside the Monastery. This is the biggest Sherpa village in Khumbu region. Again we continue our trek to Khundu village which takes about 1 hour. We will have lunch there and visit the old monastery and Khunde Hospital. We come back to our hotel in Namche via Syangboche village. It takes about 1 and half hour. Overnight in Lodge.

**Day 06 : Trek to Tengboche (3875m), 5-6 hours.**

In the morning, we start our trek like the day before. The level trail continues till reaching Kyanjuma village and takes about 1 & half hour. Then it climbs down to the Dudh Kosi River and crosses a suspension bridge. We can see a series of picturesque water driven prayer wheel. Then we will have lunch in Phungi Thangna. The steep ascent takes us to Tengboche. We can visit the monastery in the evening. The views of the mountains, Sunrise as well as Sunset are spectacular in the morning and evening. Overnight in Lodge.

**Day 07 : Attend Mani Rimdu festival**

Today we attend the festival. We will watch the famous mask dance performed by monks in front of Tengboche Monastery, The Fire Puja, Empowerment Puja and blessings, Ser Kyam which is offerings to Dharma guards such as Mahakala. Overnights in Lodge.

**Day 08 : Attend Mani Rimdu festival**

We will watch the famous mask dance performed by monks in front of Tengboche Monastery, The Fire Puja, Empowerment Puja and blessings, Ser Kyam which is offerings to Dharma guards such as Mahakala. Overnights in Lodge.
Day 09 : Attend Mani Rimdu festival

We will observe the the famous mask dance performed by monks in front of Tengboche Monastery, The Fire Puja, Empowerment Puja and blessings, Ser Kyam which is offerings to Dharma guards such as Mahakala. and

Day 10 : Back to Namche, 5-6 hours walk.

After taking breakfast, we return back same way to Namche bazaar. Firstly our trail steep descents to Dudh Kosi River and again trail ascent brings us to reach Kyangjuma village and it takes 3 hours. We will have lunch there. After lunch the trail continues straight until reaching Namche and takes about 2 hours to reach. Overnight in Lodge.

Day 11 : Trek to Lukla (2800m), 7-8 hours walk.

In the morning, we will leave the Namche Bazar and trail descents through pine trees and cross the high suspension bridge over the Dudh Kosi River. Then our trail continues River side and we arrive in Jorsalle and it takes about 2 and half hours. We continue again our trek until reaching Phakding with crossing several bridges about 1 and half hours walk. We will have our lunch there. After lunch our trail continues until Lukla with passing up and down which takes about 2 hours. Overnight in Lodge.

Day 12 : Fly back to Kathmandu.

Catch the early morning flight back to Kathmandu and transfer to hotel. Full day free for shopping. Trip conclusion and your trip comes to the end with us. Nothing but share the e-mails and arrange photos. Wilderness Excursion offer you a farewell dinner.