

## GENERAL NOTES ON EQUIPMENT FOR TREKKING IN BHUTAN

1. Adventures in Good Company's packing list covers what we have found to be essential for your safety and comfort. Because of weight considerations, please use discretion when adding to the list. You may not use everything you bring, however, you need to come prepared for all possible weather conditions. For convenience and waterproofing, pack your items in small, colored stuff sacks lined with plastic bags. Carry everything in a sturdy duffel or frameless backpack. You will be able to store extra clothes; a small hard-sided suitcase works well for storage. Druk Air has a weight limit of 20k (about 40 lbs.) Please make sure your gear in your bag weighs less than this before you leave home.
2. You will be carrying a daypack that is large enough to hold your water, camera, rain gear, snacks, and extra clothes for the changing weather conditions. Please line your daypack with a durable plastic bag to keep your belongings dry. We recommend a daypack with a capacity of between 2100 and 3480 cubic inches. Before you leave home check to be sure that your daypack is comfortable to wear all day and that there is space for all of your items. Many women prefer carrying a pack with a padded hip belt.
3. Bring a sleeping bag with down or synthetic insulation, wrapped in a heavy plastic bag (trash compactor bags work well) inside its stuff sack. Warmth, weight, cost, and durability are factors to consider. Down bags typically cost more, last longer, weigh less for the warmth, but won't keep you warm when wet and take a while to dry. On this trip, they should not get wet, but think about what other trips you would use it for. Also, if you sleep cold, consider a bag with a warmer rating (i.e. we recommend 15-20 degree rated bags, but consider a rating 5 -10 degrees if you sleep cold)
4. Well-fitting, sturdy boots are very important to your safety and enjoyment. If you plan to buy new boots, break them in by wearing them around town and taking some short hikes *before* your trip. For general trekking in Bhutan, lightweight cordura or leather boots work well. Leather boots may be waterproofed in various simple ways, and cordura boots will be waterproof if they are lined with Gore-Tex. If you have weak ankles or are recovering from an ankle injury, get leather boots or good quality cordura ones – you'll find that this will give you more support in uneven or slippery terrain.
5. **Layering** is the most practical and efficient method of insulating the body. Several layers of varied weight materials provide better insulation than one thick layer of clothing. Also, adding or subtracting layers allows you to adjust to the temperature at your particular level of activity. The layering procedure begins with a **BASE LAYER** of silk or "lightweight" synthetic long underwear and liner socks. These materials draw moisture away from the skin (this is called "wicking") and help keep you dry and therefore warmer. Some synthetic materials that we find work well include Capilene, polypropylene, MTS. Over the base layer wear a second, **MEDIUM-WEIGHT** layer such as "expedition-weight" Capilene or microfleece, or wool. Pants should also be wool or a synthetic equivalent. Over the second layer, add a third **HEAVY-WEIGHT** layer. This should be a thick material such as 300 weight fleece, warm wool or synthetic equivalent (like Primaloft). The fourth and final layer is called the **OUTER LAYER**. This layer is for protection from wind and rain. You will need a parka or jacket made of a coated nylon or a waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex, HellyTech, Membrane, H2No, or Ultrex. **Be sure it keeps water out.** Before making this important purchase, be sure that it fits you properly. It should be large enough to fit over all your layers. In particular, the hood needs to be effective. It should shield your face from the rain and turn with your head. Movement of your arms must not interfere with the hood. Put on your daypack; can you still raise your arms? Lastly, the rain pants. They should be comfortable, allow enough room for your layers, and permit free movement of your legs (for example, can you crouch comfortably?). Partial or full-length leg zippers are useful for easily putting your pants on over your boots.

Synthetic fabrics are often specified on this equipment list: Capilene, Thermastat, Polartec and Gore-Tex. In addition, there are many other patented brand names used by different manufacturers, which can make it all seem even more complicated. Basically, they all have one thing in common: The synthetics do not absorb much water compared to cotton—thus, they continue to provide warmth when wet. The specific fabric name is not as important as having material with these qualities and having a variety of weights available to you as your layering system. They really *are* miracle fabrics. Wool is also a very good choice, especially some of the new clothing made by Ibex or Smartwool. It is 100% merino wool, keeps you warm and dry and is not itchy. It also doesn't absorb the odors the way many synthetic materials do. You can also buy less expensive wool clothes at a second hand or Army/Navy store. Cotton is not a good choice! **Wet cotton (even heavyweight sweats) will rob you of your body heat faster than if you were wearing no clothing at all.**

Items on your packing list can be purchased through a number of outdoor outfitters. Here are three companies that offer mail order service and have internet "stores" (often with special deals):

Recreational Equip. Inc (REI)  
800-426-4840  
www.rei.com

Sierra Trading Post  
800-713-4534 for catalogue  
website: www.SierraTradingPost.com

Campmor  
800-226-7667 for catalogue website:  
website: www.campmor.com

**We have links to REI and Sierra Trading Post on our website on the affiliates page of our Resources section ([www.adventuresingoodcompany.com/affiliates.html](http://www.adventuresingoodcompany.com/affiliates.html)). You may also want to visit your local Army/Navy surplus store and thrift stores such as Goodwill and the Salvation Army.**