

High Tatras Trekking - The Carpathian Mountains

Trip Code: HTT

Version:



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



CHALLENGING



HIGHLIGHTS

- Trek to the top of Poland's highest peak, Mount Rysy
- Explore UNESCO-listed Krakow, Zakopane and the Five Lakes Valley
- The Carpathian Mountains home to wolf, brown bear, chamois and golden eagle

- Superb trekking and easy scrambling through wilderness Eastern Europe

AT A GLANCE

- 6 days trekking
- Max altitude - 2503 metres
- Join at Krakow

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

Straddling the border between Poland and Slovakia, the magnificent High Tatras are the highest part of the spectacular Carpathian Mountains and present a genuine wilderness setting for trekking adventures. This secret side of Europe is home to a stunning alpine landscape where excellent trails link together comfortable and scenically-located mountain refuges. In short, the High Tatras are perfect for anyone looking for a classic KE mountain holiday.

We have an introductory hike in the picturesque Strazyska Valley before paying a visit to the Polish mountain town of Zakopane. Next, we hike up to the spectacular lake of Morskie Oko on Rysy's north side and cross a high pass into the beautiful 'Polish Five Lakes Valley'. We then hike to the famously scenic Rusinowa Meadow for yet another jaw-dropping panorama of the Tatras, before transferring around to Strbske Pleso on the Slovakian side of the range. Climbing Rysy (2499m) from this side is no less special than the northern approach and the trails are generally less busy. Additionally, by hiking up from and back to our lake-side accommodation at Paprodske Pleso, we can leave most of our gear in our rooms and enjoy the day unencumbered. Two further days of trekking take us back across the 'White Tatras' via an overnight at the remote Pri Zelenom Hut and we end our incredible journey with a night in the colourful UNESCO-listed city of Krakow. If you are looking for a real hut-to-hut trekking adventure which combines two of Europe's most welcoming countries, remote mountain overnights and superb wilderness landscape all topped off with a laid-back medieval city - then this is the perfect choice.

Is this holiday for you?

This holiday, which is limited to a maximum group size of 12, follows generally good and well-marked walking trails. However, the ascent of Rysy does include some short sections of easy scrambling (protected by chains) and high up it's also possible to encounter patches of old snow. The mountain huts we use are generally inaccessible by vehicle and this means that on some days you will be carrying all of your personal gear. Since neither a sleeping bag nor a camping mattress is needed, we suggest that you can limit the weight of your rucksack to no more than 8 or 9 kilograms. And, on the longest days (Day 3 and Day 5), you can leave most of your gear at the overnight hut. On average, you can expect to be walking for 6 hours each day and to accumulate 1000 metres of ascent or descent. This trekking holiday is suitable for regular hillwalkers, looking for an excellent week's mountain walking in a largely undiscovered part of the world.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader
- A second leader on the ascent of Rzyz for groups of 10 or more
- Single timed airport transfers on arrival and departure
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- All land transport required by the itinerary

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Tips
- Some meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

TRAVEL TO YOUR DESTINATION

If flying from the UK there are low cost airlines available to the start and from the end of your holiday.

To benefit from full financial protection, ease your holiday planning, and avoid dealing with airlines, we can book scheduled flights from the UK as part of a flight inclusive package. Scheduled flights are usually more expensive than low cost alternatives, however potentially less stressful if your flight is cancelled or delayed. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

The group will meet at Krakow Railway Station in the afternoon of Day 1.

On Day 1 there will be a group, escorted transfer on public transport from Krakow Airport into the centre of Krakow.

On Day 8, there will be a group escorted transfer from the hotel in Krakow back to Krakow Airport in the early morning.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost. Taxis are also available.

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

Meal Plan

7 breakfasts, 5 lunches and 5 dinners are included in the holiday price. Where there is a wide variety of dining options we have not included these meals in the price preferring to leave the choice of where to eat and the budget for these meals to you. We recommend that you allow from £7 to £20 for each of these meals for a total of 2 lunches and 2 dinners.

Food & Water

Water from the taps may not be drinkable in all locations on this trip - please check with your guide. We recommend taking water purification tablets and a reusable bottle with a filter such as [Water-to-Go](#), which can both be used to help make safe other water sources. Please note that we do not encourage the purchase of single use plastic bottles.

In the hotels in Zakopane and Krakow, breakfasts are normally buffet style with cereal, fruit, eggs toast and a selection of cheeses and meats with bread. Both Zakopane and Krakow have a very wide range of restaurants with international cuisine plus inexpensive cafes and local fast-food outlets. In the huts, breakfasts are usually bread with a selection of meats and cheeses and sometimes cooked eggs and ham. Dinners normally consist of filling, home-made soups, pasta, goulash etc. Packed lunches of sandwiches and fruit are also provided at each of the huts. Additional snack food items, such as chocolate bars, can be purchased at the huts alongwith beers and soft drinks. Beer has been brewed in Krakow for the last thousand years and is excellent. The city has an abundance of pavement cafes and local bars to sit and watch the world go by.

Accommodation

During this holiday the group will spend 1 night in a hotel in Zakopane and 1 night in a hotel in Krakow. Accommodation in these places is twin sharing with either en-suite or shared facilities.

There are 5 nights staying in huts, which are mostly maintained by the Mountaineering Association of Slovakia. These are wooden or concrete structures usually with 4-6 bedded rooms or dormitory style with communal facilities, which usually include restaurant area, toilets and showers. Hot water at these huts is normally provided by solar heating and in some huts may be available only for a limited period each evening. In the more inaccessible mountain huts, facilities will be more rudimentary - each hut does have mains electricity and some have basic, although sometimes unreliable, wifi. Sleeping bags are not required at the huts, as bed sheets and blankets are supplied. However, you may wish to carry a cotton or silk sheet sleeping bag.

If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex for the 2 nights in the hotels. Single rooms for these 2 nights are available for a supplementary cost. If you are planning on extending your holiday additional nights at the group hotel are available on request.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader. For larger groups on Rysy a second leader will accompany the group.

Altitude

The altitudes attained on this holiday are not extreme and the maximum altitude attained is no more than the equivalent of a pressurised cabin on an international flight. You may 'feel' the altitude the first time you trek above 2000 metres but all that is required is a slower pace to compensate. You should pay particular attention to your hydration levels while trekking above 2000 metres.

Spending Money

The local currency in Poland is the Polish Zloty and in Slovakia it's the Euro. We estimate that the equivalent of £150 should be sufficient to cover your incidental expenditure including tips for local staff, drinks and souvenirs, it is possible to purchase beer, wine and soft drinks at all the huts in Poland and Slovakia. An approximate split is £100 changed into Polish zloty and 60 euros for your time spent in Slovakia. Please be aware you will need your Polish Zloty and Euros before you start trekking. Euros, dollars and sterling can be changed into Polish Zloty at the airport or in Krakow centre. Cash in Polish Zloty can be withdrawn from ATMs on arrival at the airport, in Krakow centre and in Zakopane. Please do not bring travellers cheques as these can be time-consuming to exchange.

Guidance on Tipping

Tipping is the accepted way of saying 'thank you' for good service. It is important to remember that tipping is voluntary and should be dependent on good service. On this trip we recommend that you give a tip to your guides on the trek and also on the city tour of Krakow. We estimate that €20 - 25 per person will be sufficient for these tips.

Baggage Allowance

Since you will be carrying all the personal equipment you need for this trip you should make every effort to keep this to a minimum and we recommend that you have a trial walk with your packed rucksack. With careful planning and considering that you will not have to carry a sleeping bag, it should be possible to keep the weight of your sack down to 8 or 9 kgs / 20 lbs. It is possible to leave any items not required on the trek at the group's hotel in Zakopane. Please note we have a walk of around ¼ mile between the bus station and the group's hotel in Zakopane and we therefore recommend that you travel with only your rucksack and an additional small fold-away bag to store travel clothes etc which you wish to leave at the hotel.

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

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Health & Vaccinations

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. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

The unit of currency in Poland is the Polish Zloty.

Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on a trekking or climbing trip getting some additional exercise. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. The best preparation is regular hill-walking with mountain walks every couple of weeks or so where you are out for 7 or 8 hours with several hundred metres of ascent. Failing this, we would suggest that you adopt a weekly exercise regime leading up to your trip. Running, squash and swimming are good for developing better stamina. Whatever your exercise programme, we recommend that before departure, you try to fit in a number of long walks in hilly country.

Climate

The main season for mountain trekking in this part of Poland / Slovakia is from July to September and the weather is generally very good. We can expect daytime, valley temperatures of between 20°C and 25°C, dropping to 12°C or lower at night dependent on the altitude we stay. As with any mountain area, there is always the risk of some poor weather, with rain and wind and the occasional storm. However, this area usually enjoys a very pleasant and stable climate at this time of 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. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

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.

Maps

EKO-GRAF Polish and Slovak Tatra Mountains

This map covers the three main groups of the Tatra Mountains: the High Tatras, Western Tatras and the eastern Beliansk Tatry. Coverage extends from Zakopane in the north to the southern boundary of the Tatra National Park in Slovakia. West/east the map extends from the Sivy Vrch peak and Liptowsk Mikul to Tatransk Lomnica. Contours are at 20-m intervals and shading and graphic relief give a very detailed picture of the areas topography. Numerous peaks, passes, valleys, etc. are name, and waymarked trails are indicated. Also marked are cable cars and huts. Also included is a street plan of Zakopane showing main streets and an overview road map at 1:600,000 of the area between Krakw and the Tatra Mountains. The map legend includes English.

Tatras High and Western - Belaer Kompass 2100 (1:50000)

Kompass Map & Guide - High Tatra (1:25,000)

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. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

You should bring the following items:

- Walking boots

- Trainers or sandals (for hut use)

- Socks

- Spare laces
- Trekking trousers
- Lightweight waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Shorts
- Baselayer shirts (at least one long sleeve)
- Shirt or mid-layer
- Warm fleece jacket or jumper
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Sun hat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Lightweight thermal gloves
- Daypack 35 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
- Minimal toiletries

- Antibacterial hand wash

- Small travel towel

- Basic First Aid Kit including : Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium) painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent (DEET), and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

The following items are optional:

- Wet wipes

- Trekking poles

- Camera

- Pen-knife

- Travel clothes

- Small padlock (to lock trek bag)

- Earplugs (Especially if you are not the one snoring)

- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

You will need to carry all of your personal gear for the 5 or 6 days that are spent in the Tatras. On account of this, we advise that you take a rucksack of around 40 litres capacity.

Note that bedding including sheets is provided in the refuges and, therefore, a sleeping bag is not needed. The refuges all have hot showers but towels are not provided.

Cotswold Outdoor

Many of the equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive a 12.5% discount with Cotswold Outdoor, Snow+Rock and Runners Need. The discount code can be downloaded from your MyKE account and you can use this code at the checkout, either in store or online.

Land Only Information

We sell this holiday on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. The holiday starts meeting at Krakow Railway Station for an onward transfer to Zakopane. There will be a single, escorted group transfer from Krakow Airport.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Very proud to be the Guardian's top holiday choice in Central Europe. With a maximum group size of 12 this superb trekking holiday in the High Tatras of Poland and Slovakia includes Rysy (2499m) the highest peak in Poland. You'll also get to explore Krakow's UNESCO-listed old town.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 03/12/2024 and the trip is subject to change