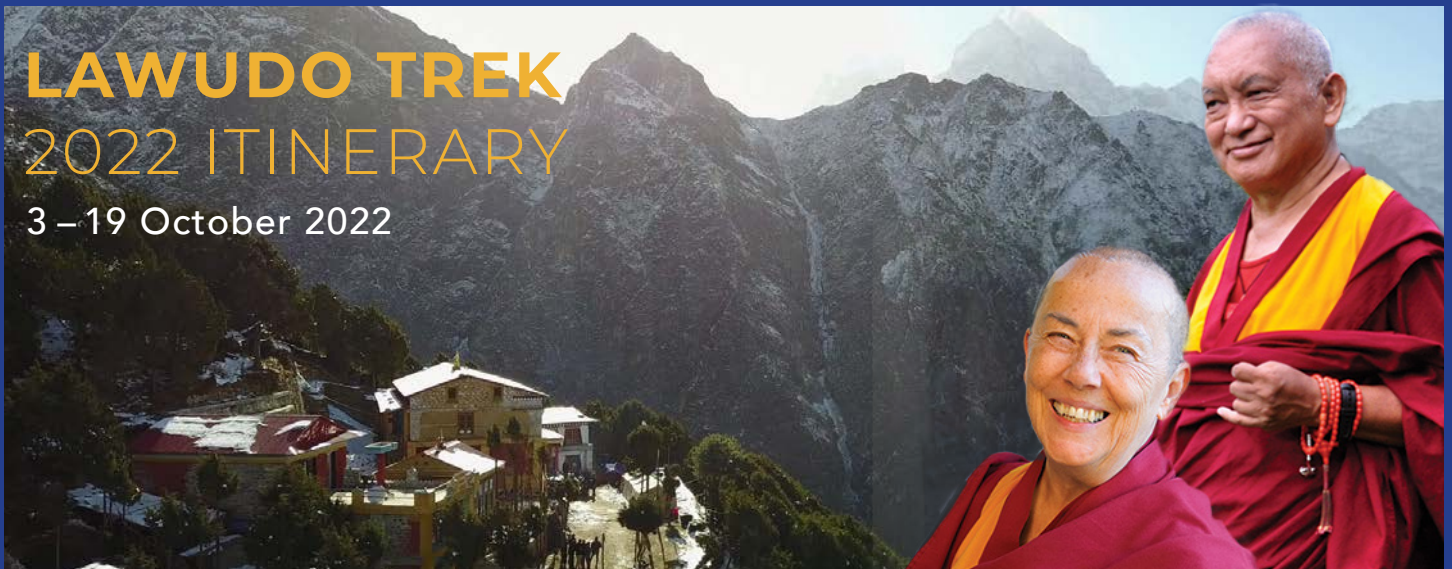


# LAWUDO TREK 2022 ITINERARY

3 – 19 October 2022



## Welcome to our Himalayan adventure!

We're so pleased to be able to offer this opportunity in 2022 to retreat at the holy cave of Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Lawudo, in Solu Khumbu, Nepal, where Rinpoche's previous reincarnation, Kunsang Yeshe, meditated for more than twenty years.

For each person who joins us on the trek, USD\$500 will be donated to Rinpoche's Lawudo Gompa ([lawudo.com](http://lawudo.com)).

Kristina Mah

Lawudo Trek Organiser

**Web** <http://www.lawudo-trek.org>

**Email** [hello@lawudo-trek.org](mailto:hello@lawudo-trek.org)

**Phone/ FaceTime/ WhatsApp** +61 455 951 274

## LAWUDO



Lawudo is a hermitage nestled in a picturesque and secluded corner of the Himalayan mountains in Solu Khumbu, the Everest region of Nepal.

For students of Lama Zopa Rinpoche there are few places on earth that hold as much significance and meaning as Lawudo.

According to Venerable Jamyang Wangmo, the author of *The Lawudo Lama* (Wisdom Publications), the place is "a beacon for all who seek an authentic, blessed and naturally mystical place".

The meditation cave was discovered by the previous **Lawudo Lama Kunsang Yeshe** and empowered by the blessings of a lifetime of pure Dharma practice. It's known as the Cave of Blissful Attainments.

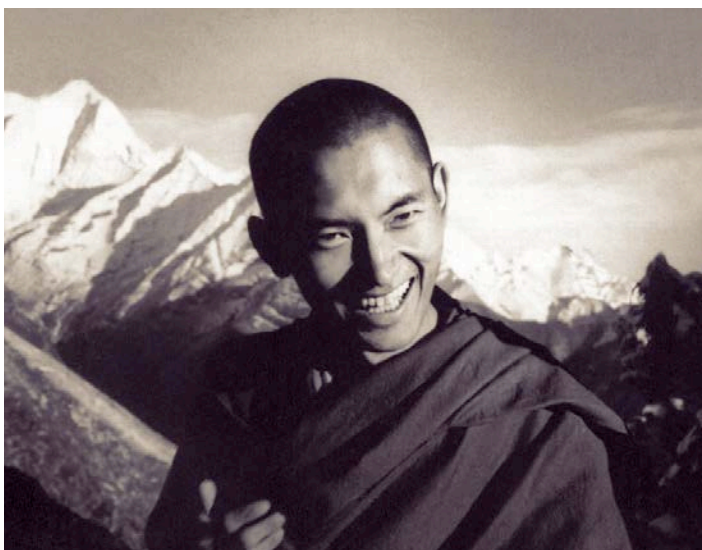


Venerable Jamyang Wangmo says “Just seeing the place blesses and transforms the most hardened of hearts and minds to think only of Dharma in one’s life.”

“Lawudo offers anyone who sincerely wants to nourish and develop their mind in Dharma and meditation one of the most conducive and inspiring opportunities imaginable.”

From 1970 Lawudo was cared for by **Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s mother** and sister, **Anila Ngawang Samten**.

Since 1991, when Rinpoche’s mother passed away, **Anila** and the monk **Venerable Tsultrim Norbu**, have looked after Lawudo and the retreaters who spend time there. Rinpoche’s brother **Sangay Chhotar Sherpa** is the director.



Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Lawudo (1970) Photo courtesy of Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive

### **Lawudo Gumpa & Retreat Center** **Sangay Chhotar Sherpa**

Director

**Office in Kathmandu**

**Postal Address:** GPO Box 7216, Chuchepati,  
Chabahil, Kathmandu, Nepal.

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## **LAMA THUBTEN ZOPA RINPOCHE**



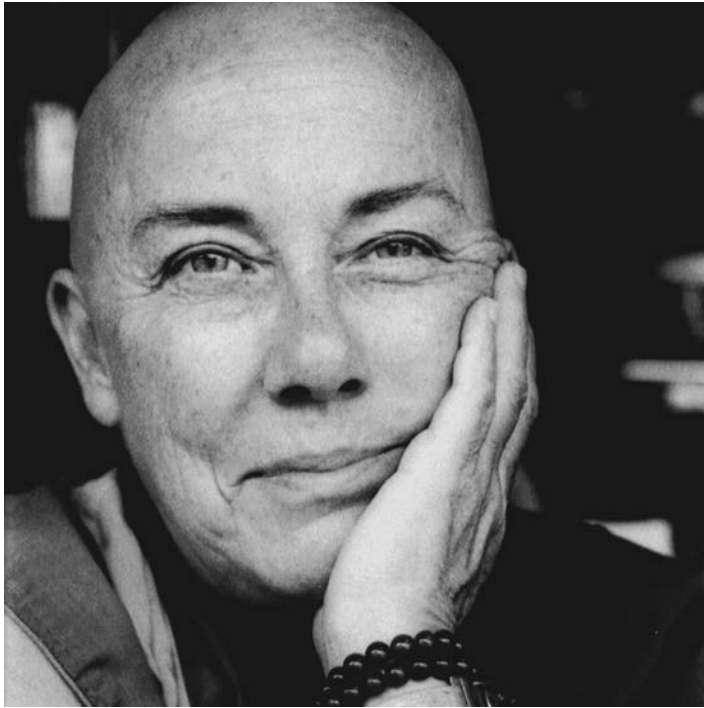
**Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche** was born in Thame, near the Everest region of Nepal, in 1945. At the age of three he was recognised as the reincarnation of the Lawudo Lama. From 1956 to 1959 he studied at Domo Monastery in Tibet. He then fled the Chinese Communist incursion and continued his study and practice in Tibetan refugee camps in India. There Rinpoche met **Lama Thubten Yeshe (1935–1984)**.

They met their first Western students in the late 1960s and Lama eventually established what is now Kopan Monastery in the Kathmandu Valley. The annual November Lam Rim courses attracted students from all the over the world.

In 1974 the lamas accepted the invitation of their students to teach in Australia, the USA, and Europe, and a year later Lama Yeshe named his burgeoning network of centres the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT).

Rinpoche is now the Spiritual Director of the FPMT, overseeing more than 160 centres and related activities in 30 countries.





Ordained since the late 1970s, **Venerable Robina Courtin** has worked full time since then for her gurus Lama Thubten Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Over the years she has served within the FPMT as editorial director of Wisdom Publications, editor of Mandala Magazine, executive director of Liberation Prison Project, and as a touring teacher of Buddhism.

An award-winning film by her nephew Amiel Courtin-Wilson, *Chasing Buddha* documents her life as well as her work with prisoners. She is one of the subjects of Vicki Mackenzie's book *Why Buddhism?* and a film by Christine Lundberg, *On the Road Home*.

*"I'm so delighted to lead this trek, our fourth, and to raise funds for the development of Lawudo and, in particular, Rinpoche's vision of Guru Rinpoche's Pure Land."*

~ Ven. Robina Courtin



Monks performing rituals at Kopan Monastery

First we will spend two days at **Kopan Monastery**.

Just north of the ancient Buddhist town of Boudhanath is the Kopan hill, which rises up out of the terraced fields of the Kathmandu valley and is visible for miles. Dominated by a magnificent bodhi tree, it was once the home of the Royal Preceptor, the priest who crowns the Kings of Nepal. The view across the valley is magical.

It is now the home of 400 monks, lamas, teachers and workers. The monks come from all areas of Nepal and Tibet with ages ranging from seven to over sixty years old.

Since the 1970s, Kopan has also been offering year-round courses and retreats for visitors from all over the world. Its sister monastery, **Khachoe Ghakyil Ling**, just down the hill, is home for 400 nuns.

Read more about Kopan at [kopanmonastery.org](http://kopanmonastery.org)

## ARRIVAL IN KATHMANDU

Our meeting point for the trek is **Kathmandu**.

We recommend that you arrive one or two days earlier to settle in at Kopan, recover from jet lag, do some sightseeing, and prepare for the trek.

We can organise your earlier arrival at Kopan, so let us know. If you are arriving by plane, our local staff will pick you up at the airport and transfer you to Kopan.

## AT THE AIRPORT

### Visa:

If you are planning on getting a "Visa-on-Arrival" at Kathmandu Airport, you still need to fill in the form "Apply for Visa Before Arriving to Kathmandu" and keep a printed copy with your passport and visa fee. Bring this form with you to the visa paying counter. This will help you save time to get the visa and may help to avoid a long queue. **The immigration counter will only accept cash payment** for the visa fee either in USD or convertible currencies, such as AUD, EURO, etc.

A one-month single entry visa will cost you USD50. You can also apply for the visa online.

Read more about Nepal visas here:

[lawudo-trek.org/index.php/2016/07/17/more-info/#visa](http://lawudo-trek.org/index.php/2016/07/17/more-info/#visa)

### Baggage:

Then you will go upstairs to claim your baggage.

Read more about what to pack here:

[lawudo-trek.org/index.php/2016/08/30/what-to-pack/](http://lawudo-trek.org/index.php/2016/08/30/what-to-pack/)

### Meet our representative:

Proceed through customs and exit into the public area of the airport.

When you're outside, look for a sign with your name on it. If you do not see anyone at the airport, or if there has been a last-minute change in your flight details, contact **Amber Tamang**, our local guide, or **Kristina Mah**, trek organiser.

There is a free phone in the arrivals area of the airport.

**Amber's phone/WhatsApp:** +977-98510-84961

**Kristina's phone/ WhatsApp:** +61-455-951-274

## ABOUT OUR LOCAL GUIDE



**Amber Tamang** is from a small Tamang village in the Solu Khumbu region of Nepal. He became a porter in 1992, to put himself through high school and college; he graduated as a lawyer. He is an advocate of better working conditions for trekking staff.

Amber has worked as the local guide for Dharma Journeys pilgrimages with Venerable Robina since 2001. Those who have traveled with him praise his patience and kindness. He is very knowledgeable about local customs of the Himalayas and its people. Amber and his family live in Kathmandu.



### Amber Tamang

Three Jewels Adventures

Amrit Marg, Thamel (next to Bhagwan, Bahal Temple) Kathmandu, Nepal

**Phone/ WhatsApp:** +977 98510-84961

**Email:** amberkathmandu@gmail.com



## DAY 1, MONDAY OCTOBER 3

- **Meet in Kathmandu (1400m)**
- **Kopan Monastery**



We meet at Kopan Monastery in Kathmandu.

If you haven't already arrived, we will pick you up at the airport and transfer you to Kopan.

## A TIP FROM AMBER

**Be aware that there will be people at the airport who will ask for money to help you with your bags.**

You can use a free luggage cart if you wish. If you prefer to use somebody, have a small bill (US or AU \$1 or 100 rupees per bag) handy in your pocket to give to them. Keep your wallet well-hidden as you exit the airport.

Our staff will find you and we will make sure you and your baggage are safely transported to Kopan Monastery.

**5:00pm:** We will all meet for afternoon tea in the dining room and be briefed about what to expect for the coming days.

**6:30pm - 7pm:** Dinner

**7:30pm:** Teachings with Ven Robina

## DAY 2, TUESDAY OCTOBER 4

- **Kopan Monastery**

**7:00am:** Meditation with Ven Robina

**7:30am - 8am:** Breakfast

**11:30am - 12:15pm:** Lunch

After lunch, you are free to relax for the afternoon.

If they're accepting visitors, you can visit **Khachoe Ghakyil Ling Nunnery** (Kopan's sister nunnery) at the bottom of the hill. You can also shop at Thamel or Boudha districts if you need to buy anything for the trek.

**6:30pm - 7pm:** Dinner

**7:30pm:** Teachings with Ven Robina

## DAY 3, WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 5

- **Travel from Kathmandu to Menthali (4 hrs)**

**7:30am - 8am:** Breakfast

**9am:** Leave after breakfast from Kopan

Lunch upon arrival at the hotel at Menthali.

**6:30pm - 7pm:** Dinner

**7:30pm:** Teachings with Ven Robina

## DAY 4, THURSDAY OCTOBER 6

- **Lukla flight**
- **Trek Lukla (2860m) to Phakding (2650m)**
- **Day's walking: about 4 hours**



Amber, second from the left, with his kind and capable team.



**7:00am:** The flight time is approximately 40 minutes. If the flight is on time, we will have breakfast at Lukla. If there's a delay (because of weather, for example), we will have a light breakfast at the airport as we wait for the flight.

**8:00am:** At Lukla, we meet our full guide and porter staff. We will have breakfast upon arrival and start walking.

**Our first day's trekking is mostly downhill and flat, with just a little being uphill. A few short up hills will be involved over the course of the day.**



The Dharma is a living culture on the trail.

## DAY 5, FRIDAY OCTOBER 7

- **Phakding (2650m) to Monjo (2835m)**
- **Day's walking: about 4 hours**

**7:00am:** Wake up, tea or coffee

**7:30am:** Meditation with Ven Robina

**8:00am:** Breakfast

**9:00am:** Ready to hit the road

The first part of our walk involves crossing over **Dudhkoshi River** and following the river canyon, passing many small tea houses and shops. This section of the trek is on the Everest Base Camp trail and is walked by many every day.

**Some short up and downhills involved.**



We cross several suspension bridges along the way.



We stop to making water bowl and incense offerings.

Our journey will start on a popular route. Highlights of the day's walk are two suspension bridge crossings.

We will pass the Sherpa villages of **Choplung** and **Ghat**.

At around 1pm, we can expect to arrive at **Phakding** for lunch.

**1pm:** Lunch

After lunch, you can visit **Thulo Gumela village monastery**, a short walk away (1.5 hours return).

**6:00pm:** Dinner

**7:30pm:** Teachings with Ven Robina

We will stay here for the night in a family-run lodge.

We cross a bridge over the river to reach the village of **Monjo**.

**6:30pm:** Dinner

**7:30pm:** Teachings with Ven Robina

### DAY 6, SATURDAY OCTOBER 8

- **Monjo (2835m) to Namche Bazaar (3440m)**
- **Day's walking: about 4 hours**

**7:00am:** Wake up, tea or coffee

**7:30am:** Meditation with Ven Robina

**8:00am:** Breakfast

**9:00am:** Ready to hit the road

Today we will enter the Everest (Sagarmatha) National Park.



Our porters offer us tea for the last hill from Mende.

**From Monjo to the base of Namche Hill, where we cross the river once again, is mostly flat.**

**From the river it is a steep uphill walk all the way to Namche Bazaar. We will be walking for about 3 to 4 hours.**

Namche Bazaar is the main trading hub for the Khumbu region. It is a bustling village, popular with Tibetan Buddhist practitioners and tourists.

**6:30pm:** Dinner

**7:30pm:** Teachings with Ven Robina

### DAY 7, SUNDAY OCTOBER 9

- **Acclimatise at Namche Bazaar (3440m)**

**7:00am:** Wake up, tea or coffee

**8:00am:** Breakfast

**9:00am:** Ready to hit the road

Enjoy a leisurely day exploring Namche Bazaar and the surrounds.

If the weather is good, our guides can show you the Sagarmatha National Park Museum that is a great place to view Mt Everest.

Have lunch at your leisure.

**6:30pm:** Dinner

**7:30pm:** Teachings with Ven Robina

### DAY 8, MONDAY OCTOBER 10

- **Namche Bazaar (3440m) to Theshyo**
- **Theshyo to Lawudo (4270m)**
- **Day's walking: about 3.5 hours**

**7:00am:** Wake up, tea or coffee

**7:30am:** Meditation with Ven Robina

**8:00am:** Breakfast

**9:00am:** Ready to hit the road

**After a nourishing rest day at Namche Bazaar, we will trek mostly flat or downhill to Thamo towards the Tibetan border.** This section will be full of spectacular views of the mountains and valleys.

**12 noon:** Lunch along the way



We naturally fall into several groups, walking to our own pace.



This last section from Theshyo to Lawudo is more physically challenging. You can expect a straight and hard uphill along a tree-lined and rocky trail. We will make our way along it slowly. Although it will be more steep, it is not long and should take us about 3 hours.

We will be greeted by Rinpoche's sister, Ani Samten.

**6:30pm:** Dinner

**7:30pm:** Teachings with Ven Robina

## DAYS 9-12, TUE OCT 11—FRI OCT 14

### • Lawudo Retreat with Ven Robina



Teachings in front of Rinpoche's cave at Lawudo.



Chilly but happy at Lawudo Gompa.

## DAY 13, SATURDAY OCTOBER 15

- Lawudo to Namche Bazaar
- Namche Bazaar to Monjo (2835m)
- Day's walking: about 6 hours

**7:00am:** Wake up, tea or coffee

**7:30am:** Meditation with Ven Robina

**8:00am:** Breakfast

**9:00am:** Ready to hit the road

On our return from Lawudo, we will trek back to Namche Bazaar on the same route, via **Mende (3840m)**.

**12 noon:** Lunch at Namche Bazaar

After lunch, we will continue to Monjo.

**6:30pm:** Dinner

## DAY 14, SUNDAY OCTOBER 16

- Monjo to Lukla
- Day's walking: about 5 hours

**7:00am:** Wake up, tea or coffee

**7:30am:** Meditation with Ven Robina

**8:00am:** Breakfast

**9:00am:** Ready to hit the road

**Day 14 is the last walking day of our journey.**

We will stop for lunch on the way and stay the night at Lukla.



Relaxing in front of the Gompa during the retreat.





Teachings at Boudha Stupa, Boudhananth.

**6:30pm:** Dinner

**7:30pm:** Teachings with Ven Robina

## DAY 15, MONDAY OCTOBER 17

- Fly Lukla to Menthali
- Drive from Menthali to Kathmandu
- Hyatt Regency, Boudhananth

**5:30am:** Wake up, tea or coffee

**6:00am:** Breakfast

**7:00am:** Ready to hit the road

Our flight will be **before 9:00am** unless there is a delay due to weather.

At Kathmandu, we will be picked up and transferred to the Hyatt Regency overlooking the Boudha stupa. **You can buy your own lunch and dinner today.**

We can relax in the afternoon and evening.

## DAY 16, TUESDAY OCTOBER 18

- Kathmandu
- Hyatt Regency, Boudanath

**Breakfast at the Hyatt Regency at your leisure.**

Relax today and explore Kathmandu, Boudha or surrounding districts.

**You can buy your own lunch again today.**

**4:00pm:** Meet at the hotel lobby for our last teaching and prayers together, at the blessed Boudha stupa.

**6:30pm:** Farewell dinner in the Hyatt Regency dining room.

## \*\*\*END OF LAWUDO TREK\*\*\*

## WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 19

- Depart

**Breakfast at your leisure in the Hyatt Regency dining room.**

After breakfast, we will organise your transfers to the airport, or you may choose to continue exploring the region.



Ven Robina's office at Lawudo.

## ABOUT THE ORGANISER



**Kristina Mah**

Trek organiser

**Email:**

hello@lawudo-trek.org

**Phone/ FaceTime/ WhatsApp:**

+61-455-951-274

Based in Sydney, Australia, I have been a student of Lama Zopa Rinpoche since 2014 when I attended the Lam Rim November course at Kopan. It was during this course that I first heard about Lawudo from my tutor Venerable Thubten Gyatso.

The Kopan November Course was my formal introduction to the Dharma, that has since become my compass in life. I have tried to maintain a strong connection with the FPMT and my teachers. I met Venerable Robina at a weekend workshop at Vajrayana Institute in Sydney, in early 2016, after which planning and organisation for the first Lawudo Trek really took flight.

The idea of this trek was quite simply to travel with a group of open-minded and inspired people to Rinpoche's cave and raise money for Lawudo Gompa, its carers and community. This trek is not run through a company; it is the result of the hard work of a few people who have generously offered their time and services to make it happen.

Thank you Venerable Robina Courtin and her Bodhichitta Trust, Amber Tamang, Valerie Ray and all the FPMT centres and groups who share our information with their communities.

I am so grateful for the opportunity that has manifested to organise this trek. I believe that this trip will be unique and fulfilling for all.

Looking forward to meeting you,

Kristina

