

**Lama Adventures Pvt. Ltd.**

# Mad Honey Expedition in Gurung Village

| Duration | Region                   | Type     |
|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| 8 Days   | Lamjung, Bhujung village | Activity |

## Overview

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This expedition takes you to the Gurung hunters of the Himalayan cliffs who descend sheer rock faces on handmade bamboo-and-rope ladders to harvest one of the world's rarest substances, mad honey.

The honey comes from *Apis dorsata laboriosa*, the giant Himalayan honeybee, which forages on high-altitude rhododendrons containing grayanotoxins. Those compounds carry into the honey, giving it mild psychoactive properties. Gurung and Magar communities have harvested it for generations - as medicine, ritual, and trade. What you'll witness is not a performance. It's a livelihood.

### What to Expect

The approach winds through terraced farmland and traditional Gurung villages, giving you a genuine sense of highland life before you ever reach the cliffs. At the harvest site, hunters work the rock face as they always have: smoking out hives, wielding long wooden poles to dislodge combs, surrounded by thousands of bees in open air. You watch from a safe distance as something ancient and unhurried unfolds in front of you.

### The Honey Itself

In controlled doses, mad honey has been used locally for joint pain, hypertension, and as a general tonic. In larger amounts, it causes dizziness and disorientation. The hunters know exactly what they're working with, and so will you before the trip.

### Highlights

- Witness the full cliff harvest alongside Gurung honey hunters
- Trek through authentic highland villages with a local guide
- Learn about traditional uses and preparation of mad honey
- Available spring (March–April) and autumn (October–November) only
- Small group sizes: maximum 8 participants

## Itinerary

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#### **Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu (1,310m)**

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Welcome Dinner

Arrive in Kathmandu and transfer to your hotel. Enjoy free time exploring the lively streets of Thamel before attending a traditional Nepali welcome dinner and tour briefing in the evening.

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#### **Day 2: Drive to Gurung Village Region (1,300m – 1,600m)**

Accommodation: Homestay

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Drive through scenic hills, rivers, and terraced fields toward the beautiful Gurung villages in the Lamjung region. Experience local culture, traditional houses, and warm village hospitality.

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#### **Day 3: Honey Hunting Preparation (1,700m)**

Accommodation: Homestay

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Meet local honey hunters and observe preparations for the hunt, including traditional tools, rope ladders, and cultural rituals performed for safety and success.

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#### **Day 4: Trek to Honey Hunting Area (2,000m)**

Accommodation: Tent Camping / Basic Lodge

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Trek through forests and mountain trails toward the remote honey hunting cliffs while enjoying stunning Himalayan landscapes and peaceful village surroundings.

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#### **Day 5: Witness Mad Honey Hunting (2,000m)**

Accommodation: Tent Camping / Basic Lodge

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Witness the thrilling honey hunting ceremony as local hunters climb steep cliffs using handmade rope ladders to harvest wild honey from giant Himalayan bee hives.

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#### **Day 6: Return to Village (1,600m)**

Accommodation: Homestay

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Return to the village and spend time interacting with local families while learning more about their traditions, farming lifestyle, and honey hunting culture.

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#### **Day 7: Drive Back to Kathmandu (1,310m)**

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Farewell Dinner

Drive back to Kathmandu through scenic countryside roads. In the evening, enjoy a farewell dinner celebrating your unforgettable Himalayan adventure.

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## **Day 8: Departure**

Meals: Breakfast

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your final departure with wonderful memories of Nepal's unique Mad Honey Hunting experience.

## **FAQs**

### **Why is Himalayan Mad Honey famous?**

Himalayan Mad Honey is famous for its rare natural properties, traditional medicinal value, and unique harvesting process from steep Himalayan cliffs. It is collected from the nectar of rhododendron flowers by the giant Himalayan honeybee (*Apis laboriosa*).

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### **Where does Mad Honey Hunting take place in Nepal?**

Mad Honey Hunting mainly takes place in the remote Himalayan regions of Nepal, especially in Gurung villages such as Bhujung, Pasgaon, Lamjung, Gorkha, and areas near the Annapurna and Manaslu regions.

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### **Which community practices Mad Honey Hunting in Nepal?**

Mad Honey Hunting is traditionally practiced by the Gurung and Magar communities, who have preserved this ancient Himalayan tradition for generations.

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### **What is the best season for Mad Honey Hunting?**

The best seasons for Mad Honey Hunting are spring (April to May) and autumn (October to November), when the honey harvesting season takes place under favorable weather conditions.

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## **How long does the Mad Honey Hunting Tour last?**

Most Mad Honey Hunting tours in Nepal last around 7 to 9 days, depending on the trekking route, village location, and travel itinerary.

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## **Is the Mad Honey Hunting trek difficult?**

The trek is considered moderately difficult. It involves walking through mountain trails, forests, and remote villages, so a basic level of physical fitness is recommended.

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## **Can beginners join the Mad Honey Hunting Tour?**

Yes, beginners can join the tour. The trek is manageable for travelers with average fitness, and experienced guides support participants throughout the journey.

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## **Why is Mad Honey considered rare?**

Mad Honey is rare because it is harvested only during specific seasons from remote Himalayan cliffs where giant wild honeybees build their hives. The harvesting process is difficult and highly traditional.

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## **Is Mad Honey Hunting dangerous?**

Mad Honey Hunting involves risks because hunters climb steep cliffs using handmade rope ladders while dealing with large wild bees. However, experienced local hunters follow traditional techniques developed over generations.

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## **What are the cultural traditions behind Mad Honey Hunting?**

Mad Honey Hunting is deeply connected to the culture and spiritual beliefs of Himalayan communities. Before the hunt, local hunters often perform rituals and prayers for

protection, safety, and a successful harvest.

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### **Is Mad Honey safe to consume?**

Mad Honey can be consumed safely in very small amounts. Excessive consumption is not recommended due to its strong natural compounds and effects.

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### **How much Mad Honey can be harvested in one season?**

The amount of Mad Honey harvested varies depending on weather, bee activity, and the number of active hives. In remote Himalayan regions, harvesting is usually limited and seasonal, making the honey highly valuable and rare.

## **Inclusion / Exclusion**

## Cost Includes

Airport pick-up and drop-off transfers by private vehicle  
Private ground transportation throughout the tour  
2 nights' accommodation in Kathmandu with breakfast  
Accommodation in local homestays, guesthouses, and camping during the tour  
Full board meals during the trekking and honey hunting period (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)  
Experienced English-speaking trekking guide and local honey hunting experts  
Porter service during the trek  
Guide and porter salary, meals, accommodation, transportation, and insurance  
Traditional honey hunting preparation and participation experience  
Camping equipment and food arrangements during the honey hunting expedition  
Necessary permits and entrance fees including TIMS and conservation area permits  
First aid medical kit carried by the guide  
All government taxes and service charges

## Cost Excludes

International airfare and Nepal entry visa fee  
Travel insurance and emergency evacuation expenses  
Lunch and dinner in Kathmandu  
Personal expenses such as laundry, phone calls, internet, battery charging, and shopping  
Alcoholic drinks, bottled drinks, tea/coffee, snacks, and other beverages  
Personal trekking gear and equipment  
Tips for guides, drivers, porters, and honey hunters  
Any additional costs caused by weather conditions, natural disasters, or unforeseen circumstances  
Any services not mentioned in the "Cost Includes" section