

beyond

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Standing among
fluttering prayer
flags beside
Gosainkunda Lake.

PORTFOLIO

Return to Nepal

ALEX TREADWAY photographed Langtang before April's earthquake and captured the endless beauty of Nepal's Himalayas.

I VISITED LANGTANG village last year, before the earthquake and resulting landslides shook the area to rubble. This outpost in Nepal, bordering Tibet, was possibly the most devastated of the region. The town itself was destroyed and will take a while to rebuild, but Langtang National Park sprawls beyond Langtang village and many hikes that weave through this rarefied mountain range are open once again. Now, more than ever, travelers should return to Nepal and trek this striking patch of the Himalayas as tourism is essential for the rebuilding of the country's economy.

On my trip, I hiked the Tamang Heritage Trek, much of which has already reopened, following a route through the Laurebina La pass, from the sacred lakes of Gosainkunda to Helambu. According to Hindu mythology, Gosainkunda Lake is home to the deity Shiva and each year thousands of devotees journey here to bathe in the blessed basins.

The Tamang heritage area has developed at a slower pace than some of the more trafficked local routes and its rich culture is still very much intact. The trail itself follows a high contour through pine trees and past chortens with dramatic drops and magnificent views across the valley far below. Inspired by the sincerity of the people and the serenity of the landscape, I took hundreds of photographs. Here are a few of my favorites that reflect the enduring allure of Lantang. It is just as stunning as ever, so plan your own pilgrimage to be anointed by the calm of the Himalayas. ☸



I stopped at a small village in the Tamang Heritage region to photograph this woman wearing a traditional dress. Her plaited hair came down to her knees. I asked her when she had last cut it and she told me that it has been growing since the day she was born; she's never even had a trim.

Pack ponies hauling trekking equipment through the Laurebina La pass from Langtang descend into clouds as they cross towards Helambu.



A series of switchbacks carved into the mountainside shows that even driving through the Himalayas takes nerves of steel.