



**Sustainable
Tourism
Project**
दिगो पर्यटन परियोजना

Birendra Tal (Lake)

The Turquoise Jewel of Manaslu

Birendra Tal, located in Tsumnubri Rural Municipality, Ward No. 1 Samagaun is a pristine, high-altitude glacial lake. Fed by the melting ice of the majestic Manaslu Glacier, its striking, shifting turquoise and olive-green waters serve as a mirror to the sky and a major highlight for adventurers embarking on the famous **Manaslu Circuit Trek**.

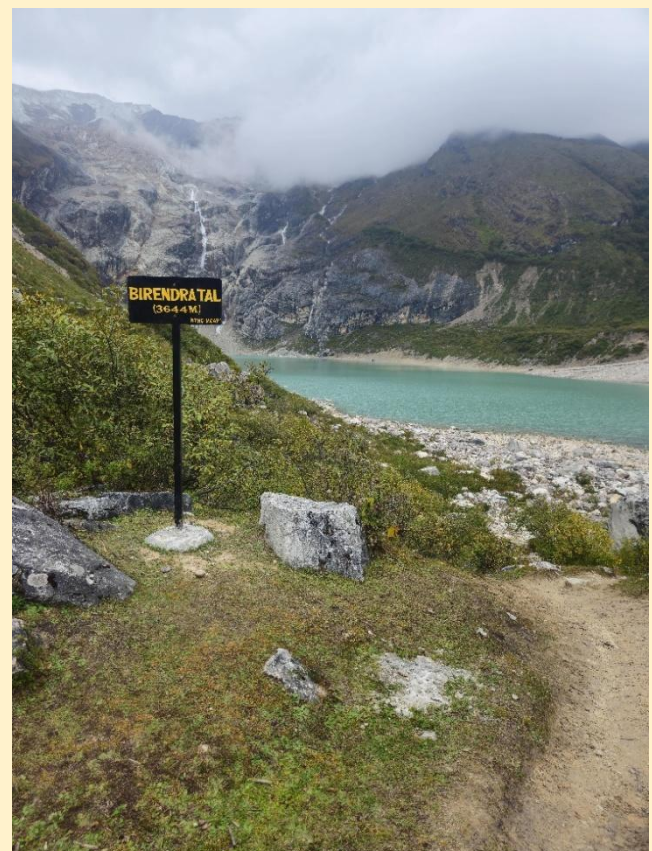
Access

Birendra Tal is primarily visited as a day-hiking side trip during the crucial acclimatization day spent at Samagaun (Sama Gaon) along the Manaslu Circuit Trek.

- **Starting Point:** Samagaun village (3,530 m).
- **Distance:** Approximately 2.5 km one way.
- **Duration:** 1 to 1.5 hours uphill; roughly 45 minutes to 1 hour return (2–3 hours round trip).
- **Trail Conditions:** The route heads northwest from the upper section of Samagaun. It is a relatively gentle, non-technical climb that winds through rocky moraines and sub-alpine juniper shrubs. The final 15–20 minutes involve navigating steeper, loose scree where careful footing is required.
- **Permit Requirements:** The lake sits within a restricted region. Trekkers must be accompanied by a licensed guide and hold a **Manaslu Conservation Area Permit** and a **Manaslu Restricted Area Permit**.

Lake features

- **Altitude:** 3,691 meters (12,110 feet) above sea level.
- **Location:** Tsumnubri -01 Samagaun, Gorkha.
- **Lake Type:** Freshwater Glacial Tarn / Moraine-dammed lake.
- **Primary Water Source:** Meltwater directly from the Manaslu Glacier.



Surrounding Peaks & Landscape

The lake rests in a dramatic alpine bowl at the foot of the massive Manaslu massif. On calm, clear mornings, the water creates a flawless, glassy reflection of the surrounding giants:

- **Mount Manaslu (8,163 m):** The world's 8th highest mountain dominates the entire northern skyline.
- **Manaslu North (7,157 m):** Offers a towering flank right above the lake basin.
- **Naike Peak & Ngadi Chuli (Peak 29):** Visible along the high-altitude ridgelines safeguarding the valley.

💡 Responsible Travel Note:

Because Birendra Tal is an active glacial lake, it is highly sensitive to climate changes. In recent years, nearby avalanches have triggered sudden water displacements. To protect its purity and respect local Buddhist traditions, **swimming, bathing, or leaving trash near the prayer flags is strictly forbidden.**

Lake Ecology & Conservation Significance

Birendra Tal holds deep ecological and cultural values as follow:

1. Hydrological & Ecological Value

As a prominent glacial tarn, the lake acts as a vital high-altitude freshwater reservoir. It feeds into the headwaters of the **Budhi Gandaki River system**, supporting downstream communities and maintaining micro-climates that sustain fragile alpine flora and fauna. The lake itself hosts specialized high-altitude plankton and micro-aquatic plants adapted to near-freezing environments.

2. A Wildlife Sanctuary Rim

The surrounding juniper slopes and high moraines provide a buffer habitat for endangered and protected species of the MCA, including the elusive **snow leopard, musk deer, and blue sheep.**

3. Cultural & Spiritual Safeguards

For the indigenous **Nubri** and Tibetan-Buddhist communities of Samagaun, Birendra Tal is deeply sacred. Local lamas strictly prohibit violence against wildlife or the pollution of natural waters, which has naturally preserved the lake's ecosystem for generations.

Seasonal Information

Season	Months	Trail & Lake Condition	Visibility & Experience
Spring	March – May	Melting snow feeds the lake, causing water levels to rise. Lower trails are lined with blooming rhododendrons.	Clear morning skies, warm daytime hiking temperatures, and excellent mountain views.
Autumn	Sept – Nov	The lake is at its most stable, deep-turquoise, and tranquil state.	Peak trekking season. Exceptionally sharp, crisp visibility, dry trails, and perfect mountain reflections.
Winter	Dec – Feb	Freezing temperatures cause the lake surface to completely freeze over, surrounded by heavy snow.	Extreme cold. The trail can become highly slippery, ice-covered, or entirely inaccessible due to snow drifts.
Monsoon	June – Aug	High rainfall and heavy glacial melt maximize water volume. Risk of localized moraine shifts.	Heavy cloud cover frequently blocks mountain views. The access route through the lower gorges faces high risks of landslides and leeches.

Quick Tips for Visitors

- **What to Pack:** There are absolutely no teahouses or shops at the lake itself. Bring a windcheater, drinking water, polarized sunglasses (to block intense glacial glare), and energy snacks.
- **Acclimatization Advantage:** Do not skip this hike! Spending a couple of hours walking up to 3,691 m and resting by the shore is the absolute best way to prepare your body before tackling the grueling Larkya La (Pass 5,106 m) later in the trek.