



# Serang Gumba

## Place of faith for people in Manaslu

**Serang Gompa** (officially known as Sancen Rabten Norbuling Monastery or Nubri Monastery) is an ancient, sacred sanctuary located in the upper Gorkha region of the Manaslu Conservation Area. Perched at an altitude of approximately 3,100 meters (10,170 feet), the monastery sits in a bowl-shaped alpine valley at the foot of Shringi Himal in Nubri Valley.

Tucked away from the main commercialized trail of Manaslu Circuit, Serang Gompa is widely considered one of the most culturally rich and spiritually significant detours.

### History

- **Origins (~500 Years Ago):** According to regional accounts, a Lama named Gonpo Tsten traveled from Kham in eastern Tibet to Nepal with his three sons, who possessed special powers known as *Druptobs*. At the request of local villagers in the Kyimolung region, the youngest son, **Nyime Cho Kyi Gyaltzen**, became their village Lama and founded the original monastery over 500 years ago.
- **Transformation of the Landscape:** Legend records that the monastery was built on dry, barren land. Following its erection and consecration, vegetation began to grow, eventually surrounding the complex with lush woodland.
- **Lineage & Modern Leadership:** For five centuries, the title of Nubri Lama was passed down through a hereditary father-to-son lineage. After the death of the 11th Nubri Lama (Chökyi Nyima) in 2006, the lineage ended. Today, the monastery operates under the spiritual leadership of the line of the 4th Dodrupchen Rinpoche (Gangtok, Sikkim).

### Features

- **History:** 500 years old monastery.
- **Location:** Tsumnubri - 5, Bihi, Gorkha (within the Manaslu Conservation Area).
- **Structure:** Built in traditional Tibetan style as a three-story rectangular stone structure. Its exterior walls are whitewashed to represent purity, and its roofs are adorned with golden ornaments.
- **Shayagya Tradition:** The surrounding valley observes Shayagya, a sacred pledge codified in 1921 that strictly prohibits hunting, slaughtering animals, or harming wildlife.

## Architecture & Layout

- **Setting:** The monastery sits at an elevation of 3,050 to 3,100 meters in a bowl-shaped valley surrounded by the peaks of Shringi Himal, Ganesh Himal, Buddha Himal, and Mount Manaslu.
- **Structure:** The main complex is built in traditional Tibetan style as a three-story rectangular stone structure. Its exterior walls are whitewashed to represent purity, and its roofs are adorned with golden ornaments.
- **Exterior Features:** Surrounding the grounds are rectangular prayer flags (*Lungta*) in five colors and cylinder prayer wheels (*Mani wheels*) inscribed with mantras in Ranjana script.



## Religious & Cultural Significance

- **Located in Kyimolung Beyul:** Serang Gumpa serves as the central monastery among 12 outlying gompas in Kyimolung, one of the sacred "Beyuls" (Hidden Valleys of Peace and Happiness) prophesied by Guru Padmasambhava in the 8th century.

- **Milarepa's Meditation Cave:** The celebrated 11th-century Tibetan Buddhist master Jetsun Milarepa visited this valley and meditated in a nearby cave.
- **Serang Shedra (Scripture College):** The monastery functions as an active monastic school (*Shedra*) and refuge, accommodating and educating over 100 monks and nuns. Uniquely, the monastery does not enforce rigid gender hierarchies that restrict nuns to secondary roles.
- **Shayagya Tradition:** The surrounding valley observes *Shayagya*—a sacred pledge codified in 1921 that strictly prohibits hunting, slaughtering animals, or harming wildlife.



## Major Festivals & Celebrations

- **Losar:** Celebrated during the Tibetan New Year with special pujas and rituals.
- **Saga Dawa:** Observed to honor the birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana of Lord Buddha.
- **Annual Rituals & Cham Dances:** The monastery hosts annual prayer gatherings where monks perform sacred masked dances (*Cham*), offer butter lamps, and perform rituals for the well-being of the world.
- **Daily Practice:** Visitors can observe or participate in morning and evening prayers, meditation sessions, and Buddhist philosophy discussions led by resident monks.



## Quick Tips for Visitors

- **Circumambulation:** Always walk clockwise around prayer wheels, chortens, and monastic structures.
- **Photography & Noise:** Maintain quiet within prayer halls and seek permission before taking photographs of monks during rituals.
- **Respect Local Culture:** Adhere strictly to the non-violence (*Shayagya*) tradition by leaving no trash and avoiding bringing meat products near the sacred monastic precinct.