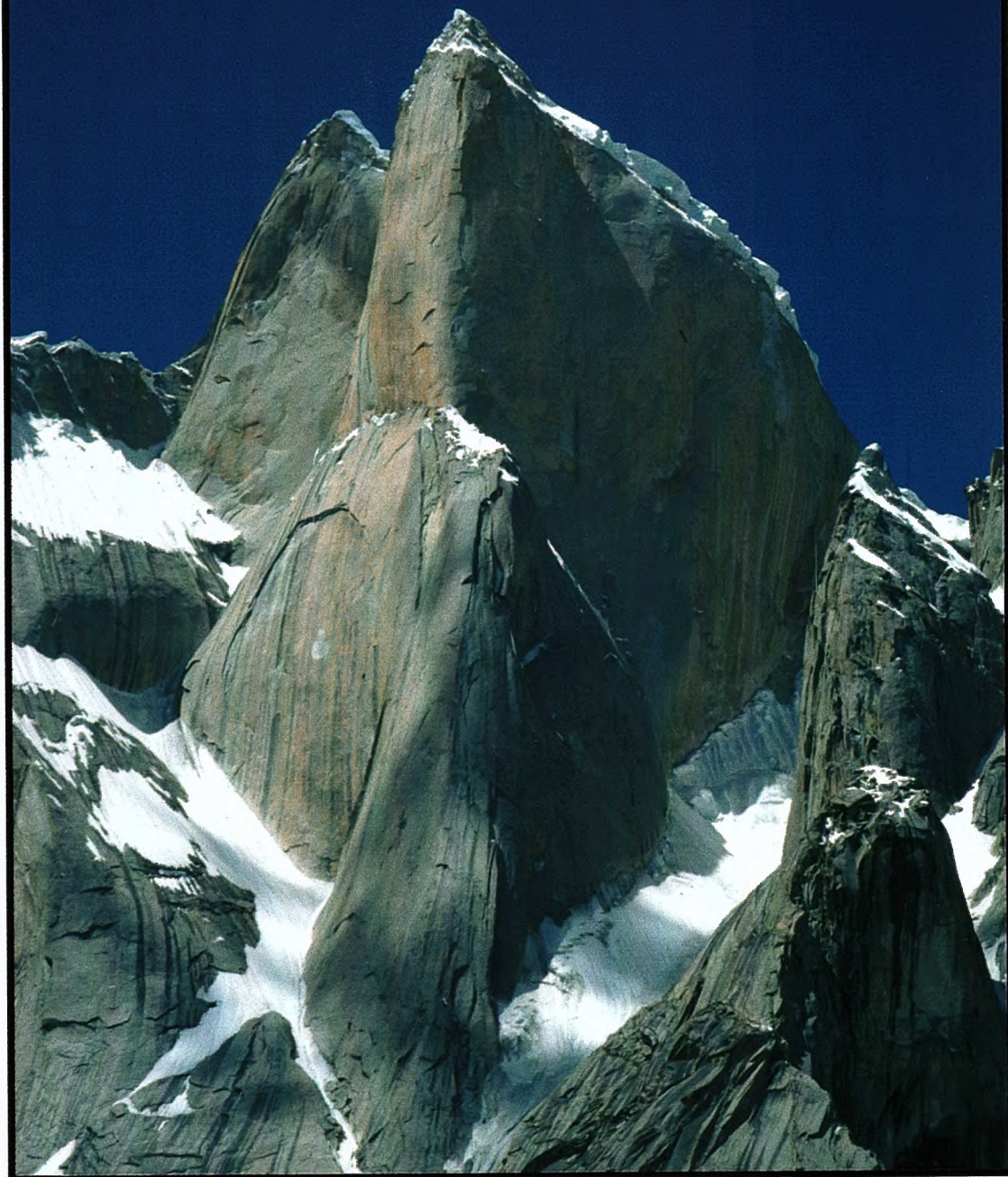


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North Wales Expedition Greater Trango 2001



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MOUNT
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Aims and Objectives

The aim of the expedition was to attempt a new climb on the Norwegian Pillar on Greater Trango from the Dungee glacier side of the mountain. Due to exposure to rock and ice fall it was decided that the team attempt a repeat of the original route on the face. Two weeks were spent hauling equipment up to the base of the pillar base. Then a further three weeks of continuous push brought the team to their high point. After 8 days in a storm and almost out of food the team descended back to the Dungee over two days.

Sponsors

We have to thank to an awful lot of people with out whose support and help the expedition would not have been such a great success. Firstly we must thank our employers who let us take the time out of our busy jobs. Iain and Martin at Plas-y-Brenin for allowing Steve, Twid and Louise to miss all those ML camps. Gill at the Beacon for allowing Steve the time off from one of their busiest summers due to the bad weather.

The Mount Everest Foundation

The MEF kindly sponsored the expedition. Our special thanks must go to Bill Ruthven for his continuing help and support.

The British Mountaineering Council for their grant.

Jagged Globe for their logistical help and help freighting some of our equipment to Pakistan. Special thanks to Simon, Steve and to David who was and endless supply of enthusiasm.

Referees

Many thanks to our friends Andy Perkins and Rob Collister for their encouragement and for their references.

Team Members

Expedition Leader

Michael Turner. Age 34 International Mountain Guide. Head of Climbing at The National Mountain Centre. Experienced Mountaineer climbed in Pakistan, Africa, Europe, South America, Greenland, North America, Borneo.

Louise Thomas Age 37 International Mountain Guide. Chief Instructor at the National Mountain Centre. Experienced Mountaineer climbed in Pakistan, Africa, Europe, South America, Greenland, North America, Borneo and Baffin.

Steve Mayers Age 39 Mountain Instructor , climbing wall manager and Science Teacher. Experienced Mountaineer climbed in Pakistan, Africa, North America and Europe. Has been a member on many caving expeditions.

Steve Long Aged 41 Mountain guide Head of Instructor Training at The National Mountain Centre. Experience Troll Wall, States, Lotus Flower Tower, European Alps, Australia and Borneo.

An account of the route

Great Trango - The climbing

After establishing ourselves at base camp, the first 2-3 days were spent (with the help of 2 porters) setting up an advanced base camp beneath the Norwegian Pillar and looking at potential lines. It quickly became clear that the large snow gullies either side of the pillar were going to prove a major obstacle to reaching any new climbing. This factor combined with the lack of any realistic unclimbed lines led us to the conclusion that our best option was to repeat the Norwegian Pillar itself - probably the most stunning line any of us had ever seen.

The base of the pillar is best reached by scrambling and crossing the snow gully from the right. Ropes were quickly fixed up the first 250m of scrambling to the base of the snow gully. A nighttime foray by Twid and Steve M. then established ropes up the first section of gully and past some particularly worrying trenches. The trenches being formed by large avalanches of snow releasing from higher up the slopes. It was sensibly decided to invest time in fixing ropes down the rocky buttresses to the right of the snow slopes. We were able to fix ropes and ferry gear to within 200m of the base of the pillar. At this point a rather dangerous crossing of the snow gully was required to reach the base of the pillar itself. All members of the team had some close shaves particularly Twid who had a nasty encounter with a very large rock/snow fall, seeing Twid emerging unscathed was perhaps the biggest surprise of the trip. Finally after 10 days we were established with 23 days food and all of our kit at the base of the pillar. We then pulled up all of our ropes and set up camp 1 on portaledges about 150m up the pillar.

The first section of the first pillar was easy angled and on the first few day fast progress was made up about 5 pitches to the base of some steep and impressive crack climbing. There were no good sites for our ledges so Steve L. and Steve M. alternated with Twid and Louise in climbing some fantastic crack pitches and fixing ropes whilst trying to start moving our substantial kit up the face. On day 4 we were within striking distance of what appeared to be a good ledge. A long and exhausting day was spent moving our kit up and finally reaching this ledge. Fortunately the ledge was OK and we were able to establish our ledges at camp 2 on airy perch on the extreme right of the pillar overlooking the snow gully. The climbing now moved back leftwards onto the Centre of the pillar and the aid climbing got progressively more difficult, slowing us down to sometimes just 1 pitch per day. Difficult aid pitches were being made desperate by melt water pouring down some of the pitches as soon as the sun hit the face. Our time at camp 2 was also prolonged by 3 days of snow during which time we could only wait at camp.

Finally after 12 days on the face we had fixed ropes to within a few pitches of the large snow 'ledges' that lie between the first and second pillars. We moved up from camp 2 for one night to an intermediate camp 3 and then another long day of hauling saw us at the base of the snow and camp 4. Poor weather then slowed our progress again but over the next 2-3 days we were able to fix ropes up the snow to the base of the second pillar. After 17 days on the face we felt that given some good weather we had every chance of getting to the top before our food ran out. Sadly this was not to be and we were pinned down by snow



for a further 4 days. Towards the end Steve L. and Louise made a spirited attempt and climbed the first couple of pitches on the second pillar. Time was definitely against us and on day 20 with no sign of an improvement in the weather and with only 2 days food left, the difficult but inevitable decision was made to descend.

A long day spent abseiling brought us to just above the snow gully in darkness. An uncomfortable night was spent worrying about crossing the gully and sitting on poor ledges in the rain. At 3am the decision was made to continue and with a big sigh of relief the rock was reached again and the remainder of the day spent abseiling eventually reaching the glacier late in the afternoon. A further 2 hours was spent stumbling down a very changed glacier to finally reach base camp - and rest. The following 2 days were spent ferrying kit down from advanced base in time for the arrival of our porters.

Steve Mayers 13/12/01

TRANSPORT

UK - Pakistan

The team flew from Manchester with PIA who gave everybody a luggage allowance of 40kg plus hand luggage. As the flight was very quite weight did not seem a problem(unusual!) We a very comfortable flight with lots or room. On the way back we had to change our flights to another day which ment a 5 hour weight at the office to change the tickets. Our advice is to send somebody else! The flight back was also excellent.

Islamabad to Skardu

After the usual hassle with going to the ministry and finding you're LO we managed to travel to Skardu? The weather had been cloudy for several days and a backlog of people met flying was out of the question. We travelled by bus. We went for the bigger Bus rather than small cramped thing. We had plenty of kit as usual. This journey we split at a new hotel on the KH. The journey really takes about 24hrs we did it in two days. Very tiring and with the normal excitement on the bends.

Skardu –Tonga

After getting our stores we travelled by jeep to Tonga in one push which took about 5 hrs. On the way back we had to change to 3 jeeps as the road had been washed away by the Bradu river. This incurred extra costs, time and hassle. We needed 3 jeeps going in (2 with kit). On the way back we used only two jeeps.

Accommodation

On our arrival we booked ourselves into The Royal Hotel! Next door to the agents office. Which was handy and clean. Food first night was great, food the second was the first nights reheated. Both Steve and Twid got ill which made the journey to base camp that bit harder. In Skardu we stayed in the Sadpara Hotel which was cheap! They have a good area to sort and pack the bags. We all felt it was not the bast option and that the K2 would be the place to stay and certainly eat. The Sadpara is a good spot on the way in as it is near the agent and shops. In Rawalpindi we went for a final meal in the PC which was fantastic and cheap, watch out for the ice cream it was not safe to eat as we got ill after.

HOTEL SADPARA

COLLEGE RD

SKARDU

PH / FAX 0575-2951 BALTISTAN

General manager NISAR ABBAS NISAR

PEARL CONTINENTAL HOTEL

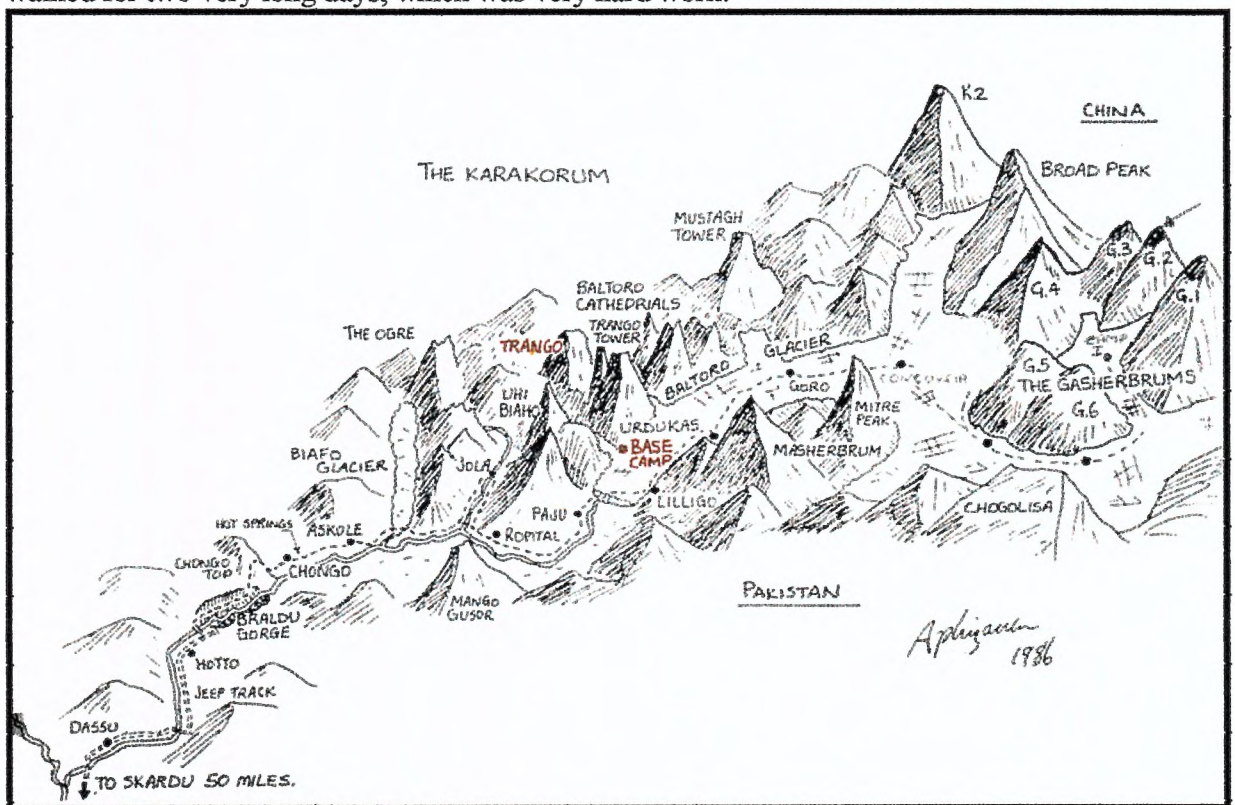
THE MALL

RAWALPINDI

Tel 051 563 927

Travel from Tonga to Base camp

The walk in to base camp where 3 very long days. The days were made harder for some members by sickness and heat stroke! On the first two days we crossed bridges which had to be paid for, more on the way out! Camping spots on the way in at both sites where at a premium due to the masses of expeditions going mainly to G2 and to many trekkers. You can buy simple rations at both places and of course Coke. Light trekking boots as the best option; one team member wore trainers. Watch for your kit at the camps as it can easily disappear off to the wrong camp. Our last day up to our base camp was a monster walking from 4am till 8pm. This we were told was only 2 porter stages, it was more like 3. After some encouragement the porters made it too the camp. Most porters returned to Piau that night but was a huge day for them. We paid for 7 and half porter stages. On the way out we walked for two very long days, which was very hard work.



Base Camp

Base camp was situated on top a moraine ridge with the most amazing view over to Masherbrum. It was higher up from the original camp, which seemed to be exposed to rock fall and flooding. It was a very windy spot so things needed tying down well. There was enough room only for our base camp tent and 4 other small tents. Our cook was present the whole time we were living on the mountain. We were the only team in the Dungee area, which was great but made life harder for our cook, and L.O. who got very bored.

Personal Kit

Thermals 2
Thin fleece + Thick fleece
Duvet jacket
T- shirt 2
Power stretch trousers
Fleece trousers
Cotton trousers
Shorts
Socks 4
Gore-Tex top
Gore-Tex bottoms
Activent top
Gloves 2 thin, 2 thick, 1 leather
Boots leather which took crampons
Sandals/ trainers
Walkman
Books 2
Suncream
Glasses/spare
Camera
Duct tape 2 rolls each
Gaiters

Climbing Kit

Helmet
Harness and chest harness
Jumars 2
Etriers 2
Daisy chains 2
Belay plate (not ATC type as they kink the rope bad when abseiling)
Prusik and ropeman
Screwgates 10
Snaps 40
Knife
Rockboots (comfortable with socks)
Crampons
Ice axe and hammer
Peg hammer
Slings 10
1 set of friends 00-4
2 set of nuts
Maillons
Ice screw 2
Headtorch (we used 4 batteries each max)
Haulbag 1 large

Group Kit

Pegs: 12 blades, 25 lost arrows (5 of each size), 16 angles (4 of each size), 30 mashies, and 12 rurps.

Wall hauler 2

Beaks 4

Skyhooks 6

Bolt driver 25 bolts used on belays

Tat 50m

Static 9mm 400m

Single ropes 2

Half ropes 2

Portaledges 2 (doubles)

Markill stormy hanging stoves 2

Spare gas stove

Big mugs / spoons

Insurance

We all took out BMC insurance, which seemed the best cover and the best bet in a real emergency. This gave you annual cover for almost everything! But it is best to check in your policy that you will be covered for new climbs as well as height of mountains. £325(annual) per person, this is a major expense often overseen.

Porter Insurance

This was organised through our agent to give our porters protection while carrying loads to and from base camp. It pays their families if they are killed.



Agent

Although not strictly needed we chose to use an agent on all our trips to Pakistan

The agent we used was Himalayan Treks and Tours.

The agent offers a contact in Pakistan, which makes organising a trip from the UK more efficient.

The agent will book hotels (at a discounted rate), organise travel including internal flights, confirming international flights, booking jeeps and coaches, airport transfers. It is also the agent who will organise in advance a guide and cook, porter insurance, storage of equipment.

Chengazi, who is very well respected locally, owns Himalaya Treks and Tours. This is probably the biggest advantage in using an agency. They are a great back up and will help when things go wrong.

HIMALAYAN TREKS AND TOURS

112 Rahim Plaza,

Murree Road,

Rawalpindi – Pakistan

Tel: 0092 51 515371, Fax: 00 92-51-56 30121 and 584566 ATTN: 265

Head Office:

College Road,

Skardu – Pakistan

Tel: 0575-2528

Cook/Guide

Through our successful trip to Beatrice in 97 we made good connections for a cook and guide. Our Cook/Guide, Imran, met the team in Islamabad. There he helped organise travel, accommodation as well as any shopping that needed doing in Islamabad. In Skardu he helped in taking us to the appropriate shops for shopping. On the approach he also assisted in organising the jeeps and porters. At base camp he helped in the day to day chores of cooking and cleaning

COOK/GUIDE: Imran Hussein Jangjungpa

Village KHANE

PO Box THANGAS DISTRICT GANGCHI TEHSIEL MASHERBRUM,

SKARDU,

BALTISTAN.

He has worked with British, Spanish, Japanese, American, French, Korean expeditions. Many trips to Gasherbrum base camp, to K2, Trango and was on the first expedition to cross the Gondo Gora pass.

Porters

Each porter would carry up to 25kg and then all his own equipment and food. They usually tie the kit onto their backs with about 10m of rope. This often brought much hilarity when expensive haulbags and rucksacks were strapped onto backs with bits of rope, without the straps being used. It was worth having lots of big bags and plastic drums.

It was very important to have a 25kg+ scale available to help weigh the loads. This is best bought in the UK and taken to Pakistan. Without a balance would leave you at the mercy of the porters.

Each time we have travelled with porters we have used a Sirdar. He is usually a more experienced porter and a well respected by the other porters. He helps with the weighing of the loads and the organising of the porters. He does carry a load but would help out others if they had a problem. The Sirdar would get paid extra for this responsibility, an extra 500rps. You either provide the porters with the kit needed by the ministry, or pay them extra instead. This is what every body does and also what the porters preferred. We paid for 7 and a half porter stages and then tipped each porter as well. Porters were fantastic and strong we had no problems with the porters. They do like lighters as gifts. The porters were organised by Imran at Tonga. The Sirdar brought the porters up to base camp at the end. The porters feed themselves but you are responsible for them and we treated minor injuries, so take extra first aid supplies.



Expenses

On arrival in Pakistan our agent organised a moneychanger to meet us and change all our cash for rupees. Make sure you have enough! No banks on the Baltoro glacier.

Flights	1200
Internal flights	150
Excess	50
Bus KKH	240
Jeeps	150
UK travel	40
Permit	800
Liaison officer	700
Equipment for LO	800
Environmental bond	170
Helicopter bond arranged though jagged globe	
Hotels	180
Food	650
Hill food	200
Meals	270
Kitchen and tarps	160
Equipment	800
Insurance	1000
Porters+Sirdar+extra!	1700
Cook	500
Agent	420
Misc	100
Total	10,280

The expedition was more expensive than anticipated due to various reasons such as our cook meeting us early, extra cooks and extra porters for the Liaison officer (He was unable to walk with us or carry even the minimum of equipment.) We were also charged a lot of money for local travel and pick-ups by our agent who previously had been helpful. We also incurred extra expense due to our delayed departure because our LO was not prepared to leave Islamabad resulting in us paying for our bus for an extra day. The same happened on our return journey from Skardu

Environmental

Every expedition will have some form of impact on the environment through which it passes to a certain degree. The actual impact left at the end of the day depends on several factors - not least the size of the expedition. Being a relatively small group we all felt that our impact on the environment which we climbed in was minimal, although as always lessons were learnt and some aspects of the trip could be improved on.

Waste

The best approach is to have minimal waste from the start - this includes disposing of all unnecessary wrappings and packaging materials before approaching the mountain - this also saves weight and *ergo* saves on porters, which as already mentioned also minimises the impact.

Unfortunately by buying our food etc at Skardu we had no option but to buy items in many small containers including glass and some canned items. The glass containers were actually saved and reused as glasses (unfortunately not for alcoholic drinks) and after the trip were in great demand by the local villagers! The cans were crushed and carried out at the end of the trip to be disposed of away from the mountain.

All burnable waste was burnt in a pit some 2 ft deep - as we did not have a spade a greater depth was not possible. The turf from the pit was removed and kept, to be replaced at the end of the trip.

Human Waste

It was not feasible to carry out human waste so latrines were used. A pit was dug some 150 m from base camp, surrounded by a low wall built of moraine debris. At the end of the trip Steve had the unenviable but essential task of burning the waste that was achieved with the aid of surplus petrol (its well worth while keeping some spare at the very end. At Advanced Base Camp glacial slots were utilised while on the wall itself the camp was on a 100 metre wide snow field, behind which was a deep bergshrund. Safety lines were used to access a part of the snowfield well away from any possible source of pollution and was felt to be the best option in the circumstances - certainly preferable to the previous teams as evidence in the form of plastic toilet bags was unfortunately too apparent.

Potential in the area

The potential for further development in the area is vast. The only advice is that any thing that is on the North side of the Dunge glacier does avalanche with frightening frequency, the south side gullies tend to get huge slush slides in the afternoon on hot days. There were many good ridgelines opposite our base camp that look possible alpine type routes. Left of the Pulpit where a few good objectives below 6000m. Our advice is climb below 6000m and avoid a LO.

Food

The only food we took from the UK was Hydrated Boil in the bag meals. We have used these on several trips. They are excellent on the wall and go a long way to ensuring that one eats a meal each day when climbing

In 1997 we bought most of our food in Islamabad. This year we did all our shopping in Skardu (apart from tarps). It is slightly more expensive in Skardu but less than transporting it from Islamabad. The main differences are; less choice, smaller containers, and glass containers instead of plastic. However it is perfectly possible to buy all your supplies in Skardu.

When shopping we found it useful to let our cook decide on quantities of staples such as flour, rice, vegetables, pulses, and fuel. We took decisions on hill food, snacks, condiments, drinks and luxuries.

The format is generally to go to one store and then work through a long list. It is advisable to calculate hill days and base camp days then plan a little over.

Our list:

Green tea; 5pkts, Black tea; loose 250g
5pkt, bags 5pkts
Coffee 1000g
Sugar 2kg
Hot Chocolate 250g 5 jars.
Tang 500g 5 jars
Soup 48 pkt (too many)
Oats 15 pkt
Corn flakes 7 pkts (not used)
Jam 8 jars
Peanut butter 2 jars
Honey 10 jars
Pickle 2 jars
Tomato ketchup 1 large
Mayonnaise 8 small jars
Oil 3lts

Vinegar 1 bottle
Soya sauce 2 bottles
Chilli
Olives 1 tin
Salt and pepper, herbs and spices.
Tinned tomatoes 8
Tomato paste 16 tins
Pasta 8pkt
Tuna fish 5tins
Tinned meat 5 tins
Tinned beans 2tins
Cheese tins 10, slices 10, triangles 10.
Tinned fruits 12
Custard 5pkt
Biscuits 100 pkts variety

Hill food

Noodles 100pkt
Dried fruit and peanuts not recommended we found maggots
Bombay mix 20 pkt
Boiled sweets
Throat sweets
Chocolate 10 boxes of 24 bars; bounty, mars lion bars, fruit and nut, kitkat, other small bars. Chocolate is not of same quality and we had a lot left over although at the start there was concern that we would not have enough! We preferred biscuits and made flap jack with honey and oats.

All veg, dahl, flour, and rice quantities bought by our cook.

This is the cheapest way to eat. At the start the cook purchased a chicken

Toilet paper, kitchen paper, towels, sponge, steel wool, soaps, vim, matches, lighters

Fuel

Kitchen; this we bought from Islamabad at great expense, lots of pots and pans and petrol stove. Fuel was bought in Skardu but picked up at a place just outside Ascole.

Medical

Fortunately we encountered no major health problems or injuries

Teeth. Prior to the trip we had dental check ups. We carried oil of cloves for toothache.

Immunisations

Highly recommended: Hepatitis A, Polio and Tetanus, Typhoid and Meningococcal.

Worth considering: Hepatitis B and Rabies

Diarrhoea

A degree of traveller's diarrhoea is to be expected. It is also easy to acquire more serious problems such as Giardias or Dysentery. We were very concerned about our water supply being contaminated by cattle. We waited 24 hrs if diarrhoea struck, drinking only treated water and no food. If the symptoms continued we used Ciprofloxacin as a one off dose if the symptoms still continued then a course was taken.

We carried Metronidazole to treat giardia but it was not needed on this trip.

Rehydration is important so we carried an electrolyte Diaorolyte for this. To stop sickness and diarrhoea and stomach cramps we had Imodium but tried not to use this unless essential.

Infections; we carried some anti-biotics for infections and anti fungal cream for athletes foot

Eye problems

We had Chloromycetin ointment for conjunctivitis and Tropicamide for snow blindness.

Skin

We carried anti-histamine and a mild steroid cream for rashes and stings.

First aid Kit

Our first aid kits consisted of the above medications plus a variety of pain killers, sutures, plasters, bandages, dressings, karrimat, alcohol wipes and lots of tape

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