

Adventure Tourism

Geography:

Gilgit has an area of 38,000 square kilometers (14,672 sq mi). The region is significantly mountainous, lying on the foothills of the Karakoram mountains, and has an average altitude of 1,500 meters (4,900ft). It is drained by the Indus River, which rises in the neighboring regions of Ladakh and Baltistan.

The Gilgit-Baltistan borders the Wakhan corridor of Afghanistan to the northwest, China's Uygur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang to the northeast, the Indian-controlled state of Jammu and Kashmir to the south and southeast, the Pakistani-controlled state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir to the south, and Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province to the west.

Geological Importance:

The Karakoram and the Himalayas are important to Earth scientists for several reasons. They are one of the world's most geologically active areas, at the boundary between two colliding continents. Therefore, they are important in the study of plate tectonics. Mountain glaciers may serve as an indicator of climate change, advancing and receding with long-term changes in temperature and precipitation. These extensive ranges may have even caused climate change when they were formed over 40 million years ago. The large amounts of rock exposed to the atmosphere are weathered (broken down) by carbon dioxide.

This process removes the greenhouse gas from the atmosphere, and could have caused the global climate to cool, triggering an ongoing series of ice ages.

Land of Famous Mountains:

Pakistan is home to 108 peaks above 7,000 meters and probably as many peaks above 6,000 m. There is no count of the peaks above 5,000 and 4,000 m. Five of the 14 highest independent peaks in the world (the eight-thousanders) are in Pakistan (four of which lie in the surroundings of Concordia; the confluence of Baltoro Glacier and Godwin Austen Glacier). Most of the highest peaks in Pakistan lie in Karakoram range (which lies almost entirely in the Gilgit-Baltistan of Pakistan, but some peaks above 7,000 m are included in the Himalayan and Hindukush ranges).

Geographic Distribution:

Most of the highest mountains in Pakistan are located in the Karakoram range, but some high mountains are in Himalaya (the highest of which is Nanga Parbat, globally ranked 9th, 8126m) and Hindu Kush (the highest of which is Tirich Mir, globally ranked 33rd, 7708 m).

Where Great Mountain Ranges Meet (Karakoram, Himalayas and Hindu Kush Mountain Ranges).

Pakistan is a land of varied and unique landscape. While high mountain ranges dominate its North, series of low mountain ranges of Suleman, Pub, Kirthar and Makran extend from North to Southwest and to South in a bone like manner. These low ranges dominate the plains and deserts to the East and warm and captivating beaches of the Arabian Sea to the South. It is, however, Gilgit-Baltistan of Pakistan which is endowed with most unique geographical feature in the world. It is here that the three great, lofty and spectacular mountain ranges, Karakoram, Hindukush and Himalayas meet.

In an area of about 500 kms in width and 350 kms in depth, is found the most dense collection of some of the highest and precipitous peaks in the world, boasting more than 700 peaks above 6000 meters, and more than 160 peaks above 7000 meters.

These include five out of the total fourteen above eight thousand meter high peaks on earth, namely the second highest rock pyramid - the K-2 (8611 m), the killer mountain Nanga Parbat (8126 m), the Hidden Peak, Gasherbrum I (8068 m), the Broad Peak (8047 m) and the Gasherbrum II (8035 m). This enormous mountain wealth makes Pakistan an important mountain country, offering great opportunities for mountaineering and mountain related adventure activities. The area is aptly called a paradise for mountaineers, adventure seekers and nature lovers. The compelling charm of these high, challenging, endless sea of rugged rock and ice pinnacles lure large- number of climbers, adventure seekers and nature lovers from across the five continents to the Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral, each year.

K2 / Chogori:

K2 is a rocky mountain up to 6000 meters, beyond which it becomes an ocean of snow. The exact height of the peak is 8,611 meters/28,251 feet.

The mountain owes its name to a coincidence. In 1856, T. G. Montgomerie from the British Cartographic Service in India was taking down the consecutive summits by the initial of the Karakoram mountain range when doing his measurements there, adding them in the order in which he was studying them. He had no idea that K2 is in fact the second highest mountain on Earth. There was no local name attached to the mountain. Attempts were made to find a name for it in the language of the inhabitants of Baltistan, the region in which it is situated. The highlanders liked "key two", the most, however, the way it is pronounced in English.

Later on, this turned out to be "Chogori". Chogori is a Balti word meaning King of Mountains. The name K2, however, still stands.

In 1860, Captain Henry Haversham Godwin-Austen, of the Survey of India, went to the Baltistan area and surveyed the famous Shigar and Saltoro valleys. This greatly contributed to the knowledge of the area. In 1861, he started from Skardu and entered Braidu valley from Skoro-La (5,043m). He then climbed and surveyed the Chogo-lungma, Kero Lungma, Biafo and Panmah glaciers. It was from Kero Lungma that Godwin-Austen climbed the Nushik pass (4,990m/16,371 ft) and is stated to have entered the 53-km-long Hispar glacier. He was perhaps the first European to reach it. It is a myth that the K2 peak, which was erroneously called Godwin-Austen peak, was discovered by him. It is, however, a fact that he explored the gateway to K2 (the Baltoro glacier), along with famous glaciers including Godwin-Austen glacier. This was indeed his outstanding contribution to the geography of the area.

Nangaparbat:

The Himalayas are a great mountain range formed by the collision of Indo-Pakistan tectonic plate with the Asian Continent/The central Himalayan mountains are situated in Nepal, while the eastern mountains extend to the borders of Bhutan and Sikkim. Nanga Parbat massif is the western corner pillar of the Himalayas. It is an isolated range of peaks just springing up from nothing, and is surrounded by the rivers

Indus and Astore. Nanga Parbat or "Nanga Parvata" means the naked mountain. Its original and appropriate name, however, is Diamir the king of mountains. Nanga Parbat (main peak) has a height of 8,126m/26,660 ft. It has three vast faces. The Raikot (Ra Kot) face is dominated by the north and south silver crags and silver plateau; the Diamir face is rocky in the beginning. It converts itself into ice fields around Nanga Parbat peak. The Rupal face is the highest precipice in the world. Reinhold Messner, a living legend in mountaineering from Italy, says that "every one who has ever stood at the foot of this face (4,500m/14,764ft) up above the Tap Alpe', studied it or flown over it, could not help the amazement of its sheer size; it has become known as the highest rock and ice wall in the Nanga Parbat has always been associated with tragedies and tribulations until it was climbed in 1953. A lot of mountaineers have perished on Nanga Parbat since 1895. Even today it is claiming a heavy toll of human lives, mountaineers in search of adventure and thrill and in finding new and absolutely un-climbed routes are becoming its victims.

The Nanga Parbat peak was discovered in the nineteenth century by Europeans. The Schlagintweit brothers, who hailed from Munich (Germany) came in 1854 to Himalayas and drew a panoramic view which is the first known picture of Nanga Parbat.

Gasherbrum 1:

Gasherbrum in local language means "Shining Wall". There are six Gasherbrum Peaks. Gasherbrum I, also known as Hidden Peak 8,068m/26,470ft), is the highest peak among them. A French Expedition led by H. De Segogne made the first attempt in 1936, but they could not climb beyond Camp V located at a height of 6,797 m. However, in 1958 an American Expedition led by Nick Clinch made the first ascent to Gasherbrum I. Schoening and Kaufman were the first to reach the summit. The approach route to Base camp starts from Skardu through Shigar Valley and approach trek starts from Askole through Baltoro glacier.

"Hidden Peak or Gasherbrum I (8068 m)" is the 11th highest mountain of the world. The British explorer M. Conway introduced the names 'Hidden Peak' and Gasherbrum II. In 1958 an American expedition, headed by Clinch and

Schoening, climbs the summit for the very first time. On the way crossing the south spur, they use short ski and snow shoes. Pete Schoening and Andrew Kauffman got to the summit on July 4th 1975. In 1982 a German expedition headed by G. Sturm climbed the Hidden Peak. G. Sturm, M. Dacher and S. Hupfauer got via a new route in the north face to the highest point. In the same year, the very first woman reached to the summit. Moreover, the first ski descent from the top of an 8000 meter peak was also made.

Gasherbrum 2:

The shining mountain on the Karakoram range is just the second highest peak amongst the Gasherbrum Peaks with an altitude of 8,035m/26,361ft. The first ascent made by Austrians led by Fritz Moravec along with Joseph Larch and Hans Willenpart on 8th July, 1956. They set up a base camp on the south Gasherbrum glacier. Camp 1 was set up at 6,005m/19,700ft. It was here that the party was forced to stay for ten days because of a severe storm. Consequently, they lost a large supply store in an avalanche. After setting up a few more camps, Fritz Moravec, Joseph Larch, and Hansenpart set up a bivouac below 7,620m/25,000ft. In spite of frostbites suffered in the bivouac, the three reached the summit of Gasherbrum II on 8th July and came back without meeting any further accident. The climb on this peak is both on rock and ice. A high level of technical skill, physical fitness and acclimatization is required. The approach to base camp is via Skardu and takes about a week's trekking on Baltoro Glacier.

An Expedition to Gasherbrum II provides a more complete mountaineering Experience than the commonly guided Tibetan 8000m Peaks (Shishapangma & Cho Oyu) which can be reached by Jeep road. The Walk to Gasherbrum II base camp along the Baltoro Glacier has been described as one of the best treks in the world.

S. No	Peaks	Height	Latitude (DD)	Longitude (DD)
01	K2 (Mount Godwin Austin), Chogori	8611 m	35.890	76.510
02	Nanga Parbat (Nanga Parbat peak. Diamar)	8126 m	35.230	74.600
03	Gasherbrum – 1 (Hidden Peak. K5)	8068 m	35.730	76.700
04	Broad Peak	8047 m	35.810	76.570
05	Gasherbrum – II (K4)	8035 m	35.750	76.650
06	Gasherbrum III	7952 m	35.440	76.350
07	Gasherbrum – IV	7925 m	35.440	76.350
08	Khianyang Kish (Khianyang Kish. Khianyang Chhish)	7852 m	36.200	75.220
09	Musherbrum	7821 m	35.720	76.300
10	Batura (Batura – 1 East)	7795 m	36.510	74.520
11	Raka Poshi (Rakaposhi Peak, Dumani)	7788 m	36.170	74.500
12	Saltoro Kangri	7742 m	35.400	76.790
13	Tirich Mir	7706 m	36.250	71.830
14	Chogolisa (Bride Peak)	7665 m	35.120	76.580
15	The Ogre (Biantha Brakk)	7285 m	35.930	75.750
16	Muztagh Tower	7273 m	35.830	76.370
17	Koyo Zom	6889 m	36.580	86.780
18	Mayer Kangri (Mayr Kangri)	6262 m	33.470	86.780