

## **An essential addition to travel guides on Tajikistan**

Cicerone have just published "Trekking in Tajikistan - the Northern ranges, Pamirs and Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor" by Jan Bakker and Christine Oriol.\* In addition to Peter Burgess and Markus Hauser, who made major contributions to the Odyssey guidebook "Tajikistan and the High Pamirs", and to my website [www.pamirs.org](http://www.pamirs.org), the two authors are among the very best qualified to give guidance on trekking in this region. (Christine is also directly involved in an ambitious and successful project to train women mountain guides in the Pamirs - "Women Rockin' Pamirs.")

The book begins with comprehensive and concise general advice on travel to Tajikistan, visas and permits, accommodation, health, weather, history, culture, maps, equipment, safety, plants, wildlife, and some good cautionary messages about "low impact trekking." The authors then explain their system of grading treks by degree of difficulty - one of the first considerations in ensuring personal safety, as altitude and terrain can be unforgiving and human settlements are few and far between, especially in the Pamirs and the Wakhan.

The guide then subdivides treks by region, not forgetting day hikes from Dushanbe, the capital. Each route is carefully described, with landmarks, excellent detail maps and information about length, estimated duration, altitude differences and degree of difficulty.

A final set of appendices provides a summary of each route, useful contacts, language notes and further reading.

Attractively produced, with many superb colour photos and a protective plastic cover, the book is just small and light enough to fit in the pocket of your anorak, and certainly belongs in your backpack.

Congratulations and best wishes to the authors and Cicerone!

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