

Annapurna Panorama - 13 days

go guide

don't leave home without it



Experience a wonderfully varied and easy-paced trek through the stunning Annapurna region, while lodging in quaint mountain villages. Track tigers at Nepal's finest national park, relax by picturesque Lake Phewa and sightsee in cosmopolitan Kathmandu.



HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Kathmandu and the Kathmandu Valley - Patan Durbar Square, Swayambhunath Pagoda, Bodhnath Stupa Buddhist stupa and various other temples and shrines
- The Pokhara Valley and Annapurna region
- Amazing panoramas of the Dhaulagiri Himal and Annapurna Range
- Waterfalls, rhododendron forests, rice paddies, mountain villages
- Pokhara and lake
- Chitwan National Park and wildlife.

What's Included

- 12 breakfast, 8 lunches, 8 dinners including dinner at a Nepali cultural evening.
- 7 nights - basic 3 star hotels, 5 nights - basic mountain lodges (2-4 passengers per room and shared facilities)
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on day 1 and day 13
- Economy class flight - Kathmandu to Pokhara
- Public tourist bus - Pokhara to Chitwan, Chitwan to Kathmandu (upgrade to private transfer is available)
- Touring of Kathmandu, Kathmandu Valley
- Chitwan National Park activities including elephant safari and park fees.
- Annapurna trek with porter and mountain guide
- Services of local English speaking guides for all scheduled sightseeing
- Entrance fees to included sites
- All relevant transfers and transportation

What's Not Included

- International flights, departure tax and visa
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Kathmandu

Monday. Welcome to Nepal and the start of your holiday! Pick up and complete a landing card on the plane or in the airport before you go through customs. Upon arrival you will be met by an On The Go/Sherpa Society representative and transferred to your hotel where you will receive a welcome drink and a briefing about your trip. **Overnight - Kathmandu**

Day 2 : The Kathmandu Valley



Kathmandu is Nepal's largest city and one of the most important points on the caravan routes between Tibet and India. This culturally diverse city is the meeting place for dozens of ethnic groups, giving it a truly cosmopolitan feel. After breakfast explore Kathmandu and its surrounds with our Kathmandu guide. The highlights of today's sightseeing include the Buddhist Stupas of Bodhnath and Swayambhunath, which are fabulous examples of Buddhist temple architecture and a great place to observe Buddhist life and culture. Also discover the delights of Patan Durbar Square, home to more than 50 stunning temples and shrines. This evening enjoy dinner and a cultural Nepali dance performance. The restaurant is a 10 - 15 minute walk, your guide will give you details on how to reach the restaurant. **Overnight - Kathmandu (B, D)**

Day 3 : Annapurna Region



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This Go Guide has been compiled with care and good faith. It gives an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. This document does not form part of a contract between the traveller and on the go and their affiliates. Any costs shown are subject to change though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of on the go

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Kathmandu – Pokhara – Syauli Bazaar. This morning fly to Pokhara at the foot of the spectacular Annapurna mountain range; the views are simply breathtaking. Your tour leader will not escort you on your flight, in Pokhara we meet our local guide and drive to Phedi where we'll have lunch before starting our trek. Following the Modi Khola River, we reach Chimrong, where we cross a bridge and climb to Chandrakot before reaching the picturesque valley of Syauli Bazaar. The highlight of Syauli, is the stunning backdrop of the 'fishtail' peak of Machhapuchre. Sit back, relax and enjoy the views! **Overnight - Syauli (Lodge)** (B, L, D)

Day 4 : Ghandruk

Syauli – Ghandruk – breakfast. The Annapurna region has a truly diverse landscape; agricultural land, beautiful rhododendron forests and austere alpine climes, the thundering Modi Khola river and an array of pretty blooms in spring. Today we continue our steep ascent, through terraced fields and small thatched hamlets to Ghandruk. Our lodge is located in the heart of the village and you'll have plenty of time to explore and meet the friendly villagers. The skyline beyond the village is dominated by the snowy flanks of Annapurna South, Humchuli and the famous spire of Machapuchare, known as the 'Matterhorn of Nepal'. **Overnight - Ghandruk (Lodge)** (B, L, D)

Day 5 : Tadapani



Ghandruk – Tadapani. We follow a well trodden trail, climbing higher, through magnificent forests of oak, witnessing Himalayan village life along the way and stopping at the local Gurung museum. We spend the night at Tadapani, where the views of Annapurna South and Huinchuli are spectacular. **Overnight - Tadapani (Lodge)** (B, L, D)

Day 6 : Ghorepani

Tadapani – Ghorepani. From Tapadani we head to the Bhurungdi Khola (stream) to begin our ascent to Banthanti village. We pass a series of picturesque waterfalls, cascading down stream to a beautiful rhododendrum forest. At Gurung Hill we are treated to some fabulous views before crossing Deurali for our final ascent of the day to Ghorepani village. Take time to meet the locals, many of whom have served as Gurkha soldiers in the Indian and British army. **Overnight - Ghorepani (Lodge)** (B, L, D)

Day 7 : Poon Hill



Ghorepani – Poon Hill - Tikedhunga – breakfast. It's an early start, as we take an excursion to Poon Hill to view the sunrise over one of the most spectacular panoramas in Nepal, a sea of 30 majestic peaks line the horizon, encompassing three of the highest mountains including the mighty Manaslu. We then begin our steep descent, through forests, pastures and fields to the village of Tikhedhunga. **Overnight - Tikedhunga** (B, L, D)

Day 8 : Pokhara

Tikhedhunga – Pokhara. Following the old trading route we trek past waterfalls and through bamboo forests to the prosperous village of Birethanti, where our expedition ends and we drive back to Pokhara. After a chance to freshen up, we visit Lake Phewa, a popular tourist spot where you can hire sail boats, shop or simply relax and enjoy the picturesque views. **Overnight - Pokhara** (B, L)

Days 9-10 : Chitwan N.P.



Pokhara – Chitwan. Leaving Pokhara this morning journey to Royal Chitwan National Park on a public tourist bus unescorted by a tour leader (upgrade to private transfer available), arriving in the afternoon. Widely acknowledged, as one of the finest National Parks in Asia. Chitwan has an amazing array of animals including; Indian one horned rhino, bison, leopard, wild boar, sloth bear, deer, langur and rhesus monkey, not to mention of course the magnificent if elusive, Bengal tiger.

Over the next two action packed days, we'll embark upon various activities including an exciting elephant back safari and a nature walk where we'll hopefully spot lots of animals including the one horned rhino and tiger, if we're very lucky! We'll take a trip down the river in a dugout canoe to see the crocodiles, ride in a bullock cart and go on a bird walk. In the evenings enjoy a dinner by

candlelight and a Tharu cultural dance with Nepali dinner. **Overnight - Chitwan NP** (B:2, L:2, D:2)

Days 11-12 : Kathmandu

Chitwan – Kathmandu. On day 11 travel back to Kathmandu on a tourist bus unescorted by a tour leader (upgrade to private transfer available), arriving early evening. Day 12, enjoy your final day, independently wandering around the maze of streets, courtyards and alleys, taking in all of the amazing sights and sounds of this bustling Capital. Kathmandu is like a museum with hidden temples and shrines tucked away in the most unexpected places. **Overnight - Kathmandu** (B:2)

Day 13 : Kathmandu

Saturday. Hotel check-out and included onward transfer to airport. **Overnight - Kathmandu** (B)

Trekking Accommodation

Whilst trekking, accommodation options are limited so please do not expect the Ritz! We use simple family run lodges, with a large sociable central dining area and a cosy wood burning fire. Rooms are on a twin share basis and we recommend you use your own sleeping bag. Lodges tend to have shared bathroom facilities and you will not always have access to a shower. It is important to understand that when you are trekking you will be away from "civilization" and the comforts of home. Trekking is adventure travel! Despite the lack of facilities, these lodges certainly have a rustic charm. Most are blessed with spectacular views and being family run operations, offer a great insight into the daily life of the Himalayan people.

Health & Fitness

Nepal offers some of the best trekking in the world, with stunning scenery and magnificent mountain ranges. You don't need to be an athlete to undertake either of our Himalayan treks; you simply require a good level of fitness, gained from regular exercise and a sense of adventure! Greater fitness will allow you to adjust with ease, leaving you to enjoy yourself and your surroundings. We suggest you begin a fitness program at least 3 months before departure. Take part in regular activities such as cycling, swimming, jogging, tennis, walking and bush walking.

The Annapurna Panorama is a perfect introduction to trekking, reaching a maximum height of 2830m, trekking at a relatively easy pace, with plenty of sightseeing and lodge accommodation. You'll be trekking on average for 4 – 6 hours a day. Everest Base Camp is a more challenging trek, reaching heights of 5400m, and trekking for up to 7 hours a day. Everyone can walk at a steady pace and there is plenty of time during the day to cover the distances and the physical exertion, though strenuous, is not sustained. There will be plenty of time to rest.

Altitude Sickness - Our treks are designed to ensure there is plenty of time for adequate acclimatisation and cases of mountain sickness are rare. Altitude sickness is not related to your level of fitness; it occurs as a result of failure to adapt

Annapurna Panorama - 13 days



to high altitudes (usually over 2000 metres) and can affect anyone. The common symptoms are headaches, nausea, irregular breathing, insomnia and the swelling of fingers and glands. Treatment is to descend to a lower altitude as quickly as possible which normally results in rapid improvement and recovery. A helping hand - Whilst you are trekking the porters will carry your baggage and all the heavy gear, you'll just need to carry a small day pack for your water, camera and essentials. We also take care of all your meals whilst you're trekking and you'll be fed 3 varied and healthy meals a day.

Visas

Visa requirements - Nepal

All nationalities must obtain a visa for Nepal. On the Highlights of Lhasa, Nepal to Tibet and Nepal & Bhutan tours you will need a multiple entry visa. It is possible for UK, EEC, Australia, Canada and USA passport holders to obtain a visa upon arrival. However in the event of visa refusal at port of entry on the go will not be held responsible.

- To obtain your visa upon arrival will need a passport with at least 6 months validity,
- 2 passport photos
- Visa fee of approx USD \$25 - \$100 in CASH (dependent on length of stay)

Please refer to the Royal Nepalese Embassy website for the current exact Nepal visa costs.

Please note there is a departure tax from Nepal Kathmandu airport of approx USD\$22 (payable by you in Nepal Rupees).

Please note that some tours eg Highlights of Lhasa, leave Nepal on two occasions so the total to pay will be approx USD\$44.

NOTE: Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller.

Please complete and return your booking form as soon as possible after booking, as we will need passport numbers, date of birth etc for permits and internal flights.

What to Pack

It is best to pack light and to bring clothes that can be layered for warmth, temperatures do drop at night. There are plenty of traders selling clothes and trekking equipment at very cheap prices en route, so there is no need to worry about not packing enough! This equipment check list suggests several items you might bring on a trek. Do not carry all of them as you will overload your backpack, try minimize to 12-14 kgs for porters.

- Holdall/kitbag, max size 100litre with a separate day pack (definitely no suitcases!)
- A high quality sleeping bag - (lodges do not always provide adequate bedding)
- First aid kit - remember plasters for damaged feet!

- Water purification tablets, iodine and water bottle
- Torch, batteries and pocket knife
- Sewing kit
- Laundry soap
- Compass and guidebook
- A towel
- Toiletries, sunscreen and lip balm (SPF +15)
- Wet wipes are very handy a quick freshen up.
- Camera and charger/batteries
- Insect repellent
- A padlock
- Binoculars for spotting animals in Chitwan NP!

footwear

- Light/medium weight walking boots/shoes
- Camp shoes
- Socks (polypropylene)

clothing

- A down or fibre filled jacket
- A good water/wind proof jacket or poncho with a hood
- Loose fitting lightweight trousers and shorts
- Thick woollen jumper/sweater
- T-shirts
- Swimwear
- Sun hat and sun glasses
- Gloves and a hat
- Plus all of the usual essentials

Group Size

The number of passengers joining our Himalayan tours and treks varies from week to week. On average our groups are small, typically between 1 - 6 travellers.

Tipping

Tipping is an important part of local incomes. We recommend you allocate the following amount per person to cover tips paid directly by you to - bellhops, luggage handlers, your driver, porters and local guides Approx: USD\$50-60
Keep a supply of small notes for local transactions and tipping.

Trek Information

- Area covered: Pokhara Valley & Annapurna Region.
- Grade: Easy - moderate
- Daily walking duration: 4 - 6 hours
- Altitude: Max. 2990 m
- Average group size: 1-8

Insurance

Most travel insurance does not cover for trekking above 2000m as standard and you may have to pay a premium to cover yourself up to 3000m. You MUST ensure that you get the correct level of cover. on the go are happy to arrange this cover for you if necessary, please contact our reservations team for details.

A Helping Hand

Whilst you are trekking the porters will carry your baggage and all the heavy gear, you'll just need to carry a small day pack for your water, camera and essentials. We also take care of all your meals whilst you're trekking and you'll be fed three varied and healthy meals a day.

sherpas

Sherpas are Nepal's most famous ethnic group and have been employed on mountaineering and trekking expeditions in Nepal since the 1920's when the Everest reconnaissance team first hired them. When Sir Edmund Hillary reached the summit in 1953, he was accompanied by Sherpa, Tenzing Norgay. Today, most expeditions still rely on Sherpa knowledge and their selfless devotion and endurance. There is no group in the world as well adapted to high altitude conditions as the Sherpa. The role of the Sherpa on expeditions, is many and varied, they are the trekking guides, porters and cooks.

Our Nepal and Tibet tours are operated in conjunction with a family run company called Sherpa Society. Sherpa Society Trekking & Mountaineering is one of the foremost trekking expedition operators in Nepal, who have been running expeditions since 1973, giving them depth, extensive experience, and knowledge in this area.

Upon Arrival

In order for us to obtain your trekking permit, you will need to provide our representatives in Nepal with the following, upon arrival:

- A copy of your passport with the endorsed Nepal visa (stamped at Nepal/Kathmandu airport upon arrival).
- Your insurance details, including insurers name, policy number and emergency telephone number.
- 5 passport size photos for the Annapurna trek
- Full details of your international flight for reconfirmation

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Style of Trip

Our Nepal and Tibet trips are semi independent in style. Local guides provide sightseeing and assistance at each port of call, the tours are not escorted throughout by a tour leader. On bus journeys and flights you will therefore travel without a guide and will be met upon arrival at your destination and transferred to your hotel. In Chitwan National Park guiding will be provided by the lodges own expert jungle guides. The number of passengers joining our Himalayan tours and treks varies from week to week. On average our groups are small, typically between 1 - 6 travellers. Transportation is a combination of public tourist buses, internal flights and private vehicles.

Annapurna Panorama - 13 days



What to Expect

Please note that Nepal and Tibet are still poor, underdeveloped regions and their infrastructure and weather patterns can sometimes lead to delays or cancellations. This may take the form of flight delays due to low cloud in the mountains or foggy conditions in Kathmandu and Lhasa. The road network is quite congested in the cities and suffers from poor maintenance on some routes again causing delays and a rough ride from time to time.

Whilst Kathmandu has a good choice of high quality hotels, in other areas hotels and facilities are not as high as Western standards. Power shortages, water supply issues and fuel scarcity are common problems throughout Nepal. We will always try to offset any unforeseen problems but patience and understanding should be included when packing. Bear in mind that tourism is still relatively new to these beautiful Himalayan regions, things do not always run smoothly and a sense of adventure is a must!

Health Requirements

It is recommended that you be vaccinated for Tetanus and Polio, if you haven't had a booster in the last ten years. Food and waterborne diseases are more common, so we recommend vaccinations for Typhoid (valid 3 years) and Hepatitis A (validity varies). You are also advised to take anti-Malarial medication. This information is intended as a guide only as recommendations can change, so please contact your local healthcare provider, several weeks before travel.

Climate

Nepal

June to September is monsoon season, during these months it is very hot and rains almost every day. October to November is much drier with pleasant temperatures in the daytime and good visibility - perfect for trekking. Winter - December to February tends to be mild in the daytime but can become very cold at night especially in the mountains. January is the coldest month of the year. March to May is very warm, with occasional showers. The annual temperatures peak in May just before the monsoons begin.

Tibet

Weather conditions vary greatly in different regions of Tibet. Central Tibet is generally mild from April to November, making it the best time to visit. Due to the high altitude it is rarely scorching, but the sun rays are very strong. From December to February/March it becomes very cold and temperatures regularly drop below freezing, travel during these months is not advisable. Tibet does not have a typical monsoon season, but May to September are the months with the highest rainfall (which mostly occurs in the evenings).

Time

- Kathmandu (Nepal) is 5 hours 45 mins ahead of GMT and does not observe daylight savings time.
- Lhasa (Tibet) is 8 hours ahead of GMT and does not observe daylight savings time.

- Thimphu (Bhutan) is 6 hours ahead of GMT and does not observe daylight savings time.

photographed with Buddhist monks. If in doubt ask your local guide for further information.

Currency

Nepal: GBP £1.00 = NPR 107 USD \$1.00 = NPR 75
Tibet: GBP £1.00 = CNY 10 USD \$1.00 = CNY 7
Exchange rates are subject to fluctuation. There are plenty of money exchanges in Kathmandu. However in case of problems with ATMs and banks, as sometimes occurs, we recommend you bring a reserve fund, preferably in US dollars. In Tibet, money can be exchanged at the Bank of China in Zhangmu, Shigatse and Lhasa. The hotels also have exchange facilities. Credit cards may be accepted in some places.

Essential Packing

Bring all the film, medicine, cosmetics, feminine hygiene products and toiletries, etc. that you will need from home as these are difficult, if not impossible to obtain in Tibet.

- Food – Snacks along the way
- Water bottle (use iodised or boiled water)
- Personal medical kit
- Sunglasses
- Sun screen lotion
- Toilet paper
- Flash light batteries
- Day pack
- Camera Bandanna / Scarf or mask – to protect your lungs from dust
- A guide book on Nepal and Tibet

Altitude Sickness

An altitude of over 3,000 meters is defined as high altitude and seeing as most of Tibet and parts of Nepal are higher than this level, it is possible to experience differing degrees of symptoms which include headaches, nausea, dizziness, fatigue and shortness of breath. These symptoms will usually decrease in severity during acclimatization and mild cases of altitude sickness should not interfere with light activity. It is important not over exert yourself if travelling to altitude and drink plenty of fluids and eat carbohydrate food to keep the body properly hydrated. Please report any symptoms of Altitude Sickness immediately to your tour leader.

Voltage

Standard voltage is 220V. Pack a worldwide/international travel adaptor to cover all destinations, that will allow you to use a hairdryer, electric shaver, charge a mobile phone or iPod etc in Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan.

Temple Etiquette

Please take particular care when visiting religious places, such as temples and monasteries. Dress and behave appropriately - don't wear shorts or sleeveless tops and do not smoke or hold hands. Shoes and hats should be removed. Within temples no carvings, statues or deities should be touched. Photography is prohibited in certain sections of most sacred sites and please do not attempt to be

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