

An Alternative Journey to the Himalayas: Community Projects & Wildlife | 14 Days



On this journey we have strived to give an alternative, rich and well rounded experience of Nepal. Tour starts in Kathmandu Valley with sightseeing of several UNESCO World Heritage sights like Pashupatinath, Bouddhanath, Swayambhunath, Changunarayan. Our second and more exciting phase of tour begins with a fly to Pokhara valley, second largest city of Nepal. Well, now the real fun begins. After spending a night in Pokhara we embark a journey (trek) to witness natural beauty and local culture in this part of Nepal. In this short and beautiful trek besides seeing majestic views of Annapurna and Dhaulagiri mountain ranges, you get to interact with local, in fact, actually even an opportunity sit down with locals in their home for a cup of tea. We will also show a community projects undertaken by SWAN to help local communities in educating underprivileged children, providing child and maternal healthcare and more. Towards later part of the tour we will take you to one of the finest national parks in Asia – Chitwan National Park where we get to see one-horned Rhino and maybe even a Tiger!

Trip Highlights

- Kathmandu Valley: Witness the spiritual mysterious of age-old cities of Kathmandu Valley, exploring UNESCO Heritage sites like Kathmandu Durbar Square,

Swayambhunath, Boudhnath and Pashupatinath, a scared Hindu temple complex on the banks of the holy Bagmati river

- Bhaktapur: Durbar Square (UNESCO Heritage site), visiting local families to watch famous and delicious Ju Ju Dhau (yogurt) being made and try making pottery
- Pokhara: World Peace Pagoda, Tibetan refugee camp and local school, daily prayers at Matapani Monastery, boating on Lake Phewa & Lake Begnas and five overnight retreat at Begnaslake Resort & Villas
- 4 nights in a camping tent
- Observe Community/Development Projects conducted SWAN
- See wildlife up-close in Chitwan National Park

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Kathmandu

Welcome to Nepal! Upon arrival in Kathmandu a *travel-to-nature Asia* guide/representative will be at the airport to greet and take us to our hotel. Please look out for your name-card once you exit out of arrival area.

If you're not feeling jet-lagged, take some time to explore Kathmandu's medieval backstreets, discover temples dating back to the 16th century, make your way down to Thamel, the main tourist hub in

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Kathmandu and a great place to dine. There are myriads of options to choose from like New Orleans Café, Rum Doodle, Bear Garden etc just to name a few. Enjoy your evening and get some rest as the adventure begins tomorrow!

Accommodation: Hotel Yak & Yeti



Day 2: Spiritual Mystries of Kathmandu Valley

Pashupatinath – Swayambhunath-Patan Durbar Square

Our local tour guide will meet us at the hotel and introduce us to the cities of Kathmandu Valley. Sightseeing Options: The striking Buddha eyes of Boudhanath Stupa (UNESCO Heritage site) watch over a lively and colorful Tibetan community and attract pilgrims from all over the Himalayan Buddhist realm. In the midst of traditional gompas, and hung with long strings of multi-colored prayer flags, Boudhanath attracts Sherpas, Tibetans and tourists alike for daily circumambulations (koras) of the stupa.

Hindu Pashupatinath (UNESCO Heritage site) and its sacred temple complex on the banks of the holy Bagmati river. Here, monkeys run up and down the steps of the burning ghats, and trident-bearing siddhus draped in burnt-orange and saffron sit serenely meditating – when they're not posing for photos-for rupees.

Climb the many steps to Swayambhunath (UNESCO Heritage site) known by the name „ the monkey temple“with its commanding views of Kathmandu (at 1420 m), its whitewashed stupas and its unique synthesis of Buddhism and Hinduism. Durbar Square (UNESCO Heritage site), one of the old capitals of the Kathmandu valley, is a synthesis of Hindu and Buddhist temples, stupas and statues, and is often the site of festivals, marriages and other ceremonies. Kathmandu's Durbar (palace) the heart of the capital was where the city's kings were once crowned and legitimized, and from where they ruled. Over dinner you go over gear for trek and get to know your trekking guide.

As in Kathmandu, the Patan Durbar Square (UNESCO Heritage site), is the ancient Royal Palace of Patan faces on to a royal square and this concentrated mass of temples and the most visually stunning display of Newari architecture to be seen in Nepal.

Accommodation: Hotel Yak & Yeti
Meals: Breakfast

Day 3: Day excursion to Changu Narayan & Bhaktapur

After breakfast drive to Changu Narayan Temple (UNESCO Heritage site), exceptionally beautiful, with depicted multi-armed Tantric deities dating back to 5th century on a hilltop at the eastern end of the valley, about 22 km from Kathmandu. For lunch we will drive to Bhaktapur city followed with sightseeing. Bhaktapur (UNESCO Heritage site) is a home of medieval art and architecture and it is like a living museum. The major sightseeing places we would visit include the Durbar Square, the museums and the pottery centre.

Late afternoon, drive back to Kathmandu. Over dinner we go over gear for trek & safari and get to know with your trekking guide.

Accommodation: Hotel Yak & Yeti
Meals: Breakfast

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Day 4: Fly Kathmandu – Pokhara (900 m)

Today we fly Kathmandu to Pokhara, centre of the Western Development Region and traditional trading centre in the shadow of the Annapurna Massif. During our half an hour flight the view of the mighty Himalayan range, including the Annapurna, Ganesh, Mt. Nilgiri, Manaslu etc will be a life time experience. Upon arrival our local representative will transfer us to our hotel. Afternoon we walk along the shores of the Phewa lake allowing us to enjoy the magnificent scenery of the Pokhara valley. Birding at the shore of the lake is equally rewarding. Time permits, we will try to hike up to the Peace Stupa, or sit and relax in a cafe with a book. We'll head for Moondance Café or Boomarang restaurant for dinner and drinks in the evening – great spots! Overnight stay in Pokhara.

Accommodation: Fish Tail Lodge
Meals: Breakfast



Day 5: Drive Pokhara - Kusma (65 km | 1.5 hrs) | Trek to Narayansthan (1,000 m)

After breakfast we drive west along the Pokhara – Banglung highway about couple of hours to Kusma (65 km) and trek to Narayansthan. Just before Kusma, the view of Machhapuchhare (6,997 m), the Fish tail mountain is excellent from Hyanja, except that from this angle it looks more like the Matterhorn than a fish tail. To see Machhapuchhare in its proper perspective you must wait until we get to Narayansthan. After organizing our gear and meeting

the local porters in Kusam, we make our descent to the Kaligandaki, one of Nepal's holy rivers. From here we can enjoy expansive views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri mountain ranges. Now the adventure begins! Cross the river over the suspension bridge, then follow the walking trail to the valley floor. Stop for a hot picnic lunch in the open meadow, then make the 400 m ascent to the picturesque village of Narayansthan (1000 m) on the plateau. You set up camp here in a pine forest. The rim of the plateau have steep rocky slopes and, often escarpments. Watching from here the changing hues of the verdant valley below is an enthralling experience indeed.

Accommodation: Tented camp
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6: Explore Narayansthan and surrounding villages

Today we take time to explore the village, meet the local people, and get an insider's perspective on the culture. We drink tea with local families in their homes, to learn more about their way of life and exchange cultural experiences. [SWAN \(www.swannepal.org\)](http://www.swannepal.org) a local charity organisation has been running village development projects for many years in Baglung district. Projects include national level health projects such as Mother & Child care programme, support to the local health posts, an integrated blind school, pre-schools for "untouchable" children, and various schools, micro credit for mother's groups, goat breeding programmes, supporting local farmers for alternative farming for income generation and many more.

Evening traditional dinner at Aama's Farm House followed with typical cultural programme.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7: Trek to Amalachaur & Camp (1,550 m | 3-5 hrs)

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After breakfast, we gently ascend up to Amalachaur VDC (village development committee) perched on hilltop from where one can have the most spectacular mountain views sweeping from east to west in a vast snowy expanse; Manaslu (8,156 m) the entire Annapurna massif with such prominent peaks as Annapurna II (7,937 m), Annapurna III & IV as well as Mt. Macchapuchare (6,993 m). The trail ascends gently through the villages, rice fields and streams with beautiful view of Kaligandaki valley below.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8: Trek to Mulabari (1,850 m | 3-4 hrs)

After leisurely breakfast, we walk gently along the Bhairamthan ridge to Mulabari for camp. The trail out of Amalachaur runs gently uphill, through open fields and scattered villages and along the ridge to our camping ground. En-route, we will visit a local kindergarten supported by SWAN, a locally famous Bhairamthan temple perched on the very edge of the gorge. The temple is dedicated to God Bhairab in his bloodthirsty incarnation of Lord Shiva, and twice a week faithful Pilgrims journey here to satisfy her bloodlust.

Upon arrival set up camp together with the trekking team for overnight. Time permits, we also visit Bhakunde village visiting the local Magar Tribe, explore surrounding and the Rhododendron forest, or simply enjoy the breath taking panoramic views of several peaks above 8,000m of altitude including Mt. Dahulagiri & Mt Annapurna from your camping ground. Rest of the day participate with the kitchen team in preparing dinner. Evening tribal dance at the camp.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9: Return to Pokhara – Begnas Lake Resort (950 m)



After early breakfast walk downhill to Nayapool valley where we will end our trek. After saying good bye to our trekking team we drive for our return Journey to Pokhara, one of the most popular tourist spots in Nepal, due to its situation on the lakes, beneath the Annapurna and Fishtail Mountains. Our hotel "Begnas Lake Resort & Villas"- located 12 km east of bustling Pokhara town lies this wondrous paradise. Surrounded by pristine Nature, with gurgling mountain springs forming natural boundaries on either side and spans a whole hillside of unspoiled forestland. Just the ideal setting for our long-deserved escape to another world!

Accommodation: Begnas lake Resort
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 10: Day for recreation - Begnas Lake Resort

Today, we will enjoy pure, unadulterated Nature. In this healing and life-nourishing environment, we can experience the Himalayan Nature Spa that offers a wide range of classical Ayurvedic activities such as Yoga, meditation, as well as soothing and rejuvenating massage conducted by an experienced team of Ayurveda experts. Swimming in the Begnas lake is something refreshing and great fun.

Alternatively, there are several interesting village trails criss-crossing the Begnas area offering possibilities of

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day hikes for us from 2-6 hours depending on one's interest.

Accommodation: Begnas lake Resort
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 11: Drive Pokhara - Bharatpur (190 km | 6.5 hrs) | Chitwan National Park (350 m)

It is a beautiful journey on the Pokhara - Katmandu highway, through Nepal's middle hill & Tarai, to the Royal Chitwan National Park. By making an early start we shall aim to reach Eco Wildlife Lodge for a late lunch. Enroute, we will make few stops to look for country life, birds like vultures, eagles, Wallcreeper & Braun Dipper in Trisuli River and its rocky walls. This evening we shall paddle down the Rapti River in search of waterbirds, crocodile or go on a Elephant safari looking for Rhinos and Tigers.

The Park comprises 1,000 sq.km of Sal and Riverine jungle and magnificent environment with a great variety of wildlife than any other area of Nepal. Over 480 species of birds have been recorded here and we can expect to see nearly one third of these, as well as many mammals and reptiles. These are likely to include the endangered Great One Horned Rhinoceros, wild boar, sambar, muntjac, spotted and hog deers, rhesus and hanuman monkeys, and possibly marsh muggar and fish eating gharial crocodiles. Tiger, leopard, sloth bears, and gaur (wild bison) are all common and regularly seen by the lucky ones! For the first two nights in Chitwan we shall be staying in comfortable Eco Wildlife Lodge with all basic facilities.

Accommodation: Tiger Tops Tharu Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12: Chitwan National Park

A full day based at the wildlife lodge. We shall explore the rivers by dug-out canoe, search the grasslands – for tigers, rhinos and other animals and go bird-watching in the forest on foot. The dry Sal forest,

Grassland dominate the Park and that hold a wide variety of species birds & mammals. This should be an outstanding day.

Accommodation: Tiger Tops Tharu Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 13: Fly Bharatpur - Kathmandu

Another early morning walk, back to the lodge, where the vehicle is waiting to take us to Bharatpur Airport for our short flight to Katmandu. Upon arrival in Katmandu our representative from travel-to-nature Asia will meet and transfer us to our hotel.

We will enjoy our last day in Magical Katmandu with plenty of time for shopping in Thamel the main tourist area of Kathmandu. Thamel is a myriad of banners, signs, music shops, bakeries, internet cafes, restaurants, bars, hotels, shops of all imaginable varieties and eccentrically clad backpackers. In the evening will head out for dinner on one of Katmandu's excellent restaurants and farewell. Over dinner we will reflect our activities and personal insights.

Accommodation: Hotel Yak & Yeti
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 14: Depart Kathmandu

Transfer to airport for your homeward-bound flight.

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Meal: Breakfast

Includes

- Airport transfers
- Twin room sharing accommodation at all hotel/lodge/resort as mentioned
- Daily breakfast throughout the trip and other meals as mentioned on the itinerary
- 2 nights at Tiger Tops Tharu Lodge in Chiwan NP with all meals, jeep safari, boating, nature walks, jungle drive, National Parks entrance fees, and conservation royalties etc. and other activities
- Airfare for the domestic flight as mentioned in the program
- Services of a local English speaking Guide for all the sightseeing tours in Katmandu as mentioned in the program
- All the land arrangements, airport picks up/drops & other long distance transport services on a private air condition vehicle.
- Entry tickets to the monuments/monasteries, included in the usual sightseeing or as mentioned in the program.
- Complete trekking arrangements which includes: all meals (Breakfast, Lunch, afternoon Tea, Dinner) in SWAN Project Villages. 2 men Alpine tents with compressed foam mattress with insulation pad
- Kitchen tent, dining tent, experienced accompanying trekking guide & kitchen staff, Porters to carry the baggage/Kitchen utensils/camping equipment etc

Excludes

- International flights
- Visa fee
- Travel insurance
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- **Individual** Personal clothing & quipment

- Tips for tour leader/guide, driver, hotel staff and porters
- Items of personal nature such as alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, laundry, showers and other unforeseen expenses
- Any item/service not mentioned under "included"

Accommodation

Hotel Yak & Yeti

Hotel Yak & Yeti is a luxury 5-star hotel in the heart of Kathmandu offering sophisticated comfort and elegance in grounds steeped in history. Located at fashionable Durbar Marg, Yak & Yeti is just minutes from Kathmandu's best shops and restaurants and central to all of the city's sights. The whole hotel is a sumptuous array of beautiful artifacts, art and traditionally crafted fixtures.

Fish Tail Lodge, Pokhara

Fish Tail Lodge enjoys a unique location situated on a peninsula across Fewa Lake. Shuttle-floats or boats transport you across to the resort. With the lake on one side and a forest hill on the other, the views are spectacular. The panorama of Annapurna range and Mount "Machhapuchre" (Fish Tail), and their reflection on the lake soothe your soul and refresh your spirit.



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Camping Tent

Our classic A-frame or ridge tents are sturdy and have plenty of room for two people. We use water and windproof flysheet which help make the tent nice and cozy inside. To complete the setup we provide a high-quality foam mattress together with an insulation pad so that you get a good sleep after a long tiring day.



Begnas Lake Resort, Pokhara

Our resort was created from our love of pure nature and of delicious wholesome food. Our unique location guarantees that we are at a safe distance from the daily bustle. We are buffered by a tropical jungle on three sides and the beautiful lake on the fourth. So although, only 11kms from Pokhara City, it really feels like an otherworldly paradise!

Tiger Tops Tharu Lodge, Chitwan

Nestled beside lush forest and overlooking idyllic Terai landscapes, Tharu Lodge is the perfect place to unwind. Inspired by the longhouse style of Tharu architecture and built from local materials, the Lodge offers a unique and comfortable insight into Nepalese village life and culture. For the adventurous guests we have safari tents which allows for an authentic experience of the jungle sounds at night.

Internal/Domestic Flight/s

Please note that sometimes due to bad weather conditions (usually in winter and in rainy season) at Pokhara and Bharatpur airports there might be some

delay and very occasionally flights may even cannot operate at all. In such cases, we might have to make an alternative arrangement to go by road.

Group/Individual

You are traveling privately with your family & friends with our guide & porter who are at your service throughout your trek. Our representative/Tour Manager in Kathmandu who will look after your transfers to and from the airport and will be around to answer other questions you may have about your trip.

An English-speaking Nepali Sherpa trekking guide will accompany you during your camping trip, who will be assisted by a cook, helpers. All our Trekking guides/leaders are highly experienced and professional. Our trekking guides are licensed by Department of Tourism, (Government of Nepal). They are trained by Nepal Academy of Tourism & Hotel Management (NATHM) and also receive additional training through Dyckhoff-Karki Himalayan Nature Treks & Expedition.

Your trekking guide assisted by additional helper/porter as necessary to carry your baggage (kitbags/duffel). All your main gear is carried for you and you only have to carry whatever you require for that day's trek. Please limit your kitbag to maximum 15 kg only because a porter carrying weight limit is 30 kg maximum. All the trekking staff are insured by travel-to-nature Asia or Dyckhoff-Karki Himalayan Nature Treks & Expedition.

Accommodation - Hotel & Lodge

In this you tour you spend your nights in a luxurious 5* hotel in Kathmandu and during the camping trip in a comfortable camping tent. In Kathmandu you stay at the centrally located Hotel Yak & Yeti. In Pokhara during your first visit you will be spending a night in a unique Fish Tail Lodge and on your return, after camping trip in Baglung, you have two nights to relax at Begnas Lake Resort where you can indulge in Ayurvedic massage, yoga, meditation and other activities (optional). On the last leg of this trip, you

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will be staying in Tiger Tops Tharu Lodge which is situated in close proximity to Chitwan National Park.

Extra Accommodation

If you require any additional accommodation in Kathmandu either before or after the trip, we can book this for you (subject to availability), please enquire with our Sales Consultant/Tour Manager.

Single Accommodation

We offer double room accommodation for the nights in Kathmandu, Pokhara & Chitwan NP only, and in camping tent, unless single room is requested.

Food & Transport | Eating & Drinking

Only breakfast is included in Kathmandu and Pokhara, all meals (Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner) are included in Chitwan and during camping. On trek our experienced and fine cook and kitchen assistant prepare all meals. They prepare range of dish from Nepalese to continental.

Drinking Water

Staying hydrated is important when undertaking any physical activity but particularly so at altitude where it is generally recommended to drink at least 3-4 litres per person per day. We strongly encourage you not to buy bottled water on trek as this contributes to the growing problem of plastic pollution in Nepal's trekking areas. We recommend that you bring a reusable bottle with a wide opening and use a SteriPEN to treat it with. A SteriPEN is a handheld UV water purifier – small, lightweight and battery powered so easy to pack for a trek. In Nepal's trekking regions most of the bottled water isn't strictly 'mineral water' anyway but is UV treated, so it's exactly the same technology. It's quick to use, far more effective than purification tablets, and the water is ready immediately.

SteriPENS are widely stocked on Amazon, outdoor shops and other online retailers; look for the latest models but avoid USB charging ones. Better still, a

SteriPEN will pay for itself over the course of the trek and you won't leave behind a single plastic bottle – you will end up spending the same or even less than you would on bottled water, plus you can keep it for future trips. If you prefer not to invest in a SteriPEN, your kitchen crew provide you boiled water which should not require treating. This is also perfect for a bedtime refill as it can double up as a hot water bottle.

Transportation

For airport and sightseeing transfers, we use a private car/vehicle. Flights to Pokhara and from Bharatpur to Kathmandu will be usually in ATR plane.

Weather

The main trekking season in Nepal is from mid-September to end-May. We do not operate treks in Nepal outside of these months as it is the rainy season. During the trekking season conditions at most altitudes are generally comfortable for walking and rain or snow are occasional occurrences. Daytime temperatures will vary from 15°C to 35°C in the Kathmandu Valley to around 10°C at 3,600m and progressively lower the higher you go. Within the trekking season there are three further distinct seasons in the weather, each offering different advantages for trekking.

Post Monsoon/autumn: Mid-September to November. This is the most popular trekking season in Nepal. Day temperatures in Kathmandu are generally above 20°C. On trek

temperatures will be lower although skies are usually clear and days should be sunny and mild with clear mountain views. However, at higher altitudes, the days can be cold and windy. Nights will be colder with temperatures dropping as low as to minus 10°C or lower in late November at the higher altitudes.

Winter: December to end February. Despite the colder conditions, this is an ideal time to trek in Nepal. Skies are usually very clear, especially in December and the mountain views are at their best. Nights will be very cold with temperatures down to minus 20°C

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but days are often pleasant and sunny. In Kathmandu, maximum daytime temperatures are 19°C.

Pre-monsoon/spring: March to May. Both day and night temperatures will be warmer in general but haze will often build up in the afternoons. It is very hot in the lowlands and temperatures rise to 30°C in Kathmandu. Flowers bloom in this season and this is one of the reasons people chose to trek in spring.

WHAT TO TAKE

Essential Equipment

1. Porter carries about 15 kg kitbags/duffel, therefore please respectfully limit your kitbag/duffel to 15 kg maximum. Any baggage/items not needed on trek can be left in storage at the hotel in Kathmandu free of charge. Please also see the 'internal/domestic flights weight limit' of 10 kg.
2. 4 season sleeping bag (5 season for December, January and February departures)
3. 3/4 season jacket (4 season for winter departures)
4. 1-2 x 1 liter water bottles (ideally with a wide opening).
5. Waterproof synthetic or leather walking boots (worn in)
6. Waterproof jacket and trousers Gaiters Trainers for the evening
7. Warm hat Scarf/Buff (which can be pulled over your nose and mouth to protect against fine mountain dust)
8. Warm gloves
9. Several pairs of walking socks
10. Tracksuit or thermals for the evening
11. Warm mid-layer (fleece)
12. Light - mid weight trousers (warmer for winter)
13. Shorts or skirt for women
14. Sunhat, sunglasses, sunscreen and lip salve with

sun protection

15. Daypack
16. Towel
17. Head-torch (headlamp)
18. Plastic bags (bin liners) to line daypack and for packing clothing in the kitbag
19. Toilet paper
20. Small personal first aid kit
21. Plug adaptor

We believe in reducing our negative environmental impacts wherever possible, this goes for when you need to spend a penny in the great outdoors! If no facilities are available there may come a time when you need to go to the loo behind a tree/bush/rock. To avoid leaving toilet paper behind we recommend taking biodegradable dog poo/sandwich bags with you. Once you have done your business you can pop the used toilet roll in here and take it off the mountain or trail at the end of the day and dispose of it when there are appropriate facilities available.

Optional Equipment

1. Water treatment: SteriPEN / water purification tablets
2. Trekking pole(s)
3. Hand washing gel
4. Biodegradable soap/shampoo
5. Sleeping bag liner
6. Solar charger/spare batteries/power bank

There are many equipment shops in Kathmandu where you can buy much of the above clothing/equipment. The quality does vary and cannot be guaranteed so you should choose carefully.

Internal Flights Weight Limit

There is a weight restriction on the flight to Pokhara and from Bharatpur of 25 kg checked baggage plus 5 kg hand luggage. It is not a problem for you to check in 1-2 kg more than this as long as you are happy to pay an excess luggage charge (approx. €2 per kg).

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Passport

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information below is primarily for European passport holders, and other nationalities should check with their travel agent or the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visa

Most nationalities require a visa for Nepal, which can be obtained in advance or on arrival. If you wish to apply visa before departure, please visit this link: <https://nepaliport.immigration.gov.np/> The current cost of a visa on arrival is US\$30 for 15 days, US\$50 for 30 days and \$125 for 90 days. All are multiple entry. The visa on arrival fee can be paid in cash in US Dollars or Euros. Application forms are available in the immigration hall (or for electronic passports, there are visa registration machines which, after inserting your passport, automatically fill out a form for you. If you use the machine you will not need a passport photo). You must first join the queue to pay the visa fee and then go to the relevant immigration desk to obtain your 15, 30 or 90-day visa stamp. If you use the paper form to obtain a visa on arrival then you will also need one passport photo (a photo is not required if you use the electronic registration machines but we recommend you bring one with you anyway just in case, for any reason, the machines cannot read your passport). There might be long queues for visas on arrival.

Please note: Visa regulations can change without notice, therefore please check the current regulations or contact us.

Vaccination

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements. Recommended vaccinations are: Polio, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Typhoid, Hepatitis A. There is low to no risk of malaria throughout Nepal and antimalarial tablets are not usually advised although may be considered for certain higher risk groups; you may wish to consult your GP/doctor or travel health clinic for further advice. The risk is highest in the low lying southern 'terai' districts bordering India.

A yellow fever certificate is only required if traveling from a country with a risk of yellow fever transmission or for travelers having transited for more than 12 hours through a country with risk of transmission.

Dengue fever is a known risk in Nepal. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available for Dengue, and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Most of our trips to Nepal go to high altitudes where there is a risk of being affected by Acute Mountain Sickness. Our itineraries are designed to enable everyone to acclimatize to these altitudes, but you should be aware that it is still possible for you to be affected. Please refer to the information below on Altitude Warning for further advice on AMS.

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information.

Local Time

Nepal's Time zone:
Asia/Kathmandu +04:45 (CET +04:45)

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Electricity

Nepal's Electricity:
230V, 50Hz. Electric 'load shedding' (temporary power-cuts) might occur occasionally. On teahouse treks the majority of lodges now have electricity and charging facilities in the communal areas for batteries, for a fee (around Rs150- 350 per hour). Battery life can be affected by cold - lithium batteries are best.

Money

Nepal's Currency:
The national currency of Nepal is the Nepalese Rupee (NPR), with an exchange rate at the time of publication of approximately 140 to the Euro and 130 to the US\$. It is illegal to import or export rupees, but foreign currency is not limited, provided it is declared on arrival. Keep your change receipts, as you will need them if you want to change rupees back into hard currency at Kathmandu airport.

ATM Availability

There are ATM machines in Kathmandu only. You can exchange cash in Pokhara as well. Please do not rely wholly on ATM machines as many are broken or have run out of money and all have a per day withdrawal limit of approximately €150-175 or US\$ 175-190.

We recommend you bring most of your money for the trek in cash and change it at the airport on arrival. Credit cards are accepted in many of the larger shops and restaurants in Kathmandu.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

It is illegal to import or export rupees, but foreign currency is not limited, provided it is declared on arrival. We recommend taking your personal spending money in cash (dollars or euros can all be changed easily). Cash can be changed easily at the airport on arrival in Kathmandu or at money changers in the Thamel area of Kathmandu. Please note that travellers cheques can NOT be exchanged in Nepal.

Please allow Rs1000-2000 (€7-14) per day for extra drinks, showers and charging on trek, and for meals not included in Kathmandu. This amount is given as a rough guideline only. If you plan to take a SteriPEN to treat non-boiled water on trek you will spend less than this, whilst if you buy imported snacks and drinks you may spend a few euro extra each day. There are teahouses selling drinks and snacks along the entire length of the trekking route.

Tipping

Tipping is of course entirely at your discretion, but it is part of the culture in Nepal. Tipping can be an awkward affair especially when you are not familiar with the country. Your leader will help with tipping and will provide a list of suggested tips. This will include tips for drivers, hotel porters and other hotel staff, local sightseeing guides, and if trekking will include staff such as guide, assistants and porters.

Based on the above distributions, you should allow approximately Rs10000 - Rs15000 (€71-106) in total for all tips for the tour duration. Please try to give all tips in local currency.

Important Information

On all guided trips although our leaders/guides are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorize them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.