

Himalayan Highlights: Nature, Culture & Wildlife | 15 Days



This holiday is tailored especially to explore some of the major highlights of Nepal. We explore the medieval cities and diverse culture of Nepal, the stunning Hindu & Buddhist temples and pagodas in Katmandu Valley, second largest city of the valley, Patan, known for its fine bronze and silver crafts; ancient city of Bhaktapur, with its medieval cobblestone streets. We take you to Nuwakot where Nepal's first king Prithvi Narayan Shah made his palace that is adorned with intricate wooden designs. Immerse yourself in local life and culture and discover Pokhara valley and surrounding hills with breathtaking mountain ranges. Visit Lumbini, birth place of Lord Buddha and pay a homage. We will take you to two of Asia's finest game parks, Chitwan National Park and Bardiya National park, where we may even be able to see the elusive Bengal Tiger!

Trip Highlights

- Explore Kathmandu Durbar Square(UNESCO Heritage site) , Swayambhunath Stupa(UNESCO Heritage site) & Bodhnath Buddhist Stupa(UNESCO Heritage site)
- Visit Hindu Pashupatinath (UNESCO Heritage site) and its sacred temple complex on the banks of the holy Bagmati river
- Bhaktapur: Durbar Square(UNESCO Heritage site) , visiting local families to

watch Ju Ju Dhau (yoghurt) being made and try making pottery

- Visit 18th century Nuwakot Palace built by Nepal's First King Prithivi Narayan Shah
- Pokhara: World Peace Pagoda, Himalayam Mountain Museum & Tibetan refugee camp.
- Patan: Patan Durbar Square (UNESCO Heritage site)
- Pay homage to Lord Buddha's at his birth place in Lumbini
- Visit Chitwan National Park and Bardiya National Park to spot various wildlife and maybe the elusive Bengal tiger
- Stunning and closer views of Annapurna Himal.

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 we're not feeling jet-lagged, we can 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 Kathmandu and a great place to dine. There are myriads of options to choose from like New Orleans Cafe, Rum Doodle, Bear Garden etc just to name a few. Enjoy your evening and get some rest as the adventure begins tomorrow!

Accommodation: Hotel Manaslu

Day 2: The Magical Kathmandu Valley

Kathmandu Darbar Square - Swayambhunath - Patan

Your local tour guide will meet you at the hotel and introduce you to the cities of Katmandu Valley. You begin your morning visiting Kathmandu's main

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sites, including Durbar Square, Teleju Temple and the House of the Living Goddess. 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. Next, you 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. From here you can see the mighty Himalaya rising above the valley. Journey to nearby Patan (UNESCO Heritage site), the city of arts and architecture founded in AD 250 and known for its fine works in bronze, silver and copper. Many of these treasures can be seen in the new Patan Museum. Time permits also visit the Tibetan Refugee Camp to watch a demonstration in carpet weaving.

Accommodation: Hotel Manaslu
Meal: Breakfast

Day 3: Day trip to Bhaktapur and Panauti

Today you will drive 1 Hrs. 15 min. (34 km) on Araniko Highway to Panauti and en-route you will visit Bhaktapur. The UNESCO-protected Bhaktapur city is a great example of arts and crafts dating to the medieval age. On the other hand Panauti will offer you a great chance to admire not only the architecture, but also wonders of nature.

In Bhaktapur you will explore Bhaktapur, an important and fascinating World Heritage Site, made up of three large squares filled with shrines, temples and activity; Bhaktapur is the essential Newari city with some of the finest architecture in Nepal. In its heyday (14th-16th centuries) Bhaktapur was the most powerful of the Kathmandu Valley kingdoms and its capital for 300 years. Despite earthquakes and frequent

rebuilding, Bhaktapur today retains a medieval feel; its neighborhoods are still caste oriented and centered around the old ponds or tanks (built to store water for drinking, washing and religious ceremonies) and which continue as a social focal point. Local people here are predominantly farmers or engaged in the traditional crafts of pottery, metalwork, art and woodwork which have supported the city since its establishment in the 12th century to service the trade route between Tibet and India and remain active industries. A fascinating place to explore! You will spend about 3 hours here and continue your journey to Panauti.

Panauti was a commercial town in medieval time, but now it is very much at a standstill. With a very well preserved backwater and a fascinating place to explore with interesting temples and impressive Rana mansions which have been restored. There are 03 rivers including Brahmayani, Roshi & Punyabati. This town was derived from the holy river of Punyabati. Here is metal works and agriculture with beautiful rice terrace, where we can see agriculture base culture & lifestyle. Panauti local people celebrate several festival and fairs here. There are stupas, stone art and temples around with beautiful woodcarvings. Panauti offers the beautiful Hindu Temple i.e. Indreshwor Mahadev (12-13 centuries) which has single plinth base, pagoda type with 03 storied, 03 main gates & 06 tundals. The temple dedicated Shiva destroyed god in Hindu pantheon. The festival that is most celebrated is like 12 years Makara Mela, Swosthani Purnima & Shivaratri. After taking time enough to explore your guide will bring you back to Kathmandu.

Accommodation: Hotel Manaslu
Meal: Breakfast

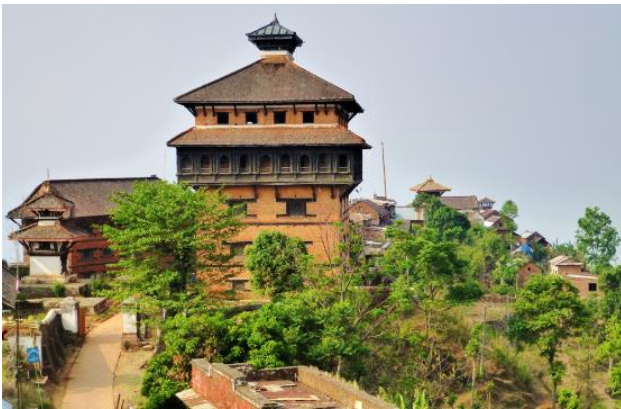
Day 4: Drive Kathmandu - Nuwakot (934 m | 79 km | 2.30 hrs)

The Highlights of Nuwakot

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Your local guide will pick you up from your hotel and drive to Nuwakot, the best for historical and cultural point of view. About 80 km north of Kathmandu and will take around 3 hrs to arrive Nuwakot which, offers the breathtaking views of the northern Himalayan ranges including Manaslu to Langtang Range. It was once on a major trade route to Tibet, one of the most thriving commercial hubs of Nepal, and regarded as the Western gateway to the Kathmandu valley. You should be arriving to your hotel around lunch time. Rest of the day at leisure & relax. Overnight stay in Nuwakot.

Accommodation: The Famous Farm
Meal: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 5: Explore Nuwakot | Seven Story Palace

After your leisurely breakfast walk to remarkable historical hill town Nuwakot bearing a special importance in the history of Nepal. It was once on a major trade route to Tibet, it has since become one of the most thriving commercial hubs of Nepal, and was by many regarded as the Western gateway to the Kathmandu valley. King Prithvi Narayan Shah, the founder of modern Nepal, planned and launched several unification campaigns from here some 260 years ago. A pagoda style building popularly known as seven-story Nuwakot Palace stands as a landmark of Nuwakot. With strategic hilltop viewpoint, it is

rarely frequented yet pristine historical hill town offering the opportunity for learning history and culture.

Seven Story Palace in Nuwakot is the center of attraction for the visitors. It was built in 1762 AD on the name of "DurgaRatna". However, it has eventually been renamed and become famous as the Seven Story Palace after fallen of two story in the earthquake of 1934. Strategically placed and impressively built, this palace is of extreme historical importance and is still regarded as a model of architecture. With 5 feet thick walls and towering seven stories above the streets, the palace was built to withstand the strongest of forces.

A testimony to its historical significance is that it was in this Palace that King Rana Bahadur Shah welcomed the British representative, Mr. William Kirkpatrick, in 1793, just after the war between Nepal and China. In addition, here, in 1816 AD, King Gribanyoddha received a letter of credential from Mr. E. Gardner, the first representative of the UK to visit Nepal. The massive quake of 2015 badly hit the palace square locals have initiated campaigns to restore the historic and cultural significance of this landmark. Rangamahar (The Palace of Malla King) and Bhairabi temple are the other attractions. Situated just east of the Seven Story Palace, Rangamahar is made of beautiful oily bricks with fine wooden carvings.

Since Nuwakot was jointly ruled by the Malla kings of the Kathmandu valley, Rangamahar was built for the purpose of a recreation spot for the three kings of the valley. Four story palace is known as Garadghar. It is situated facing the Seven Story palace and is believed that the King Prithvi Narayan Shah built it in 1762 as a Tilingaghar (Store of weapons). Featuring a unique Nepalese architect of Pagoda style, it stands majestically in the town and remains at the center of attraction for the visitors. You can spend enough time in Nuwakot. If it's not too much you also have an opportunity of doing the village walk until the Malika hill 1450 m, which offers the wide view of the land terraces along with

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the distant mountains. You will return to back to your hotel. Rest of the day free for your individual activities.

Accommodation: The Famous Farm
Meal: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 6: Drive Nuwakot – Pokhara (900 m) | Astam Village (1400 m | 200 km | 6-7 hrs)

It is a beautiful journey on the Katmandu- Pokhara highway, through Nepal's middle hills to Astam Village after Pokhara. By making an early start we aim to reach Hana No Le Resort late in the afternoon. En-route, you will make stop in Pokhara for lunch followed with a visit to Pokhara International Mountain Museum. Pokhara itself is one of the most popular tourist spots in Nepal, due to its situation on the lakes, beneath the Annapurna and Fishtail Mountains.

If you want to explore in depth the cultural activities of the country in chronological order, in especially in anthropology, geography, the first pioneers of mountaineering, then this Museum is the right place to go for knowledge. The museum provides a wide range of informative topics, among which you will surely find one that suits you. If time permits, you can visit other important sites in Pokhara. Pokhara is a paradise where you can find many different activities in one place; Phewa Lake invites those who love boating and paragliding. With its gloomy history, David Falls with its underwater waterfall is popular.

Your hotel Hana No Le Resort in Astam Hill, a small mountain village, 17-km apart from Pokhara. It is located on a hillside & you will stay for three nights here.

Accommodation: Hana No Ie Resort
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7: In Astam Village

Rest of your two days here in Astam you are free to explore enjoy on your own or with your guide and discovering and Harmonizing with the Tradition and Nature of the middle hills. Hananoie provides several activities so that you can enjoy the Himalaya and the lifestyles of the people here. Your hotel facing to the Himalaya provides 180°panoramic views of 7000-meter class Annapurna range, downhill rivers and villages. Rest of the day free for your own activities.

Accommodation: Hana No Ie Resort
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 8: Fly Pokhara - Bharatpur | Chitwan National Park (350 m) – Tiger Tops Tharu Lodge

After your early breakfast drive to Pokhara domestic airport to catch a short flight to Bharatpur in Chitwan (20mins). Upon arrival at the airport you will be received by Tiger Tops Tharu Lodge representative to the lodge at the edge of the Chitwon national Park arriving in time for lunch.

Arriving at the gate to Tiger Tops Tharu Lodge, you will be met by Tiger Tops staff with a welcome drink in the dining hall. Continue to the garden where the lunch will be waiting for you. After the lunch you will have a chance to settle in to your rooms and explore the lodge grounds - our large swimming pool beckons temptingly and it is easy to while away a sunny afternoon swimming and reading with a cool drink in hand. After tea and

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biscuits in the main area, we suggest you take a stroll to the Narayani river with the resident elephants and one of the naturalists and watch the family of elephants bathe and frolic while you enjoy your sundowners. Return to the lodge for hot showers and cold drinks before dinner.

The Royal Chitwan National Park comprises 932 square kilometres of Sal and riverine jungle, a magnificent environment which contains a greater variety of wildlife than any other area of Nepal.

Over 500 species of birds have been recorded here, as well as many mammals, reptiles and numerous insects. Mammals are likely to include the endangered Indian Rhinoceros, Wild Boar, Sambar, Muntjac, Spotted and Hog Deer, Rhesus and Hanuman Monkeys, whilst reptiles we may encounter include Marsh Muggers Crocodile and the fish-eating Gharial. Leopards, Sloth Bears, and Gaur (wild bison) are all fairly common and occasionally seen by the lucky ones! Chitwan has the largest population of Tigers in Nepal and although never easy to locate, we do have a chance of coming across one of these magnificent cats, especially in the evening when they are at their most active.

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

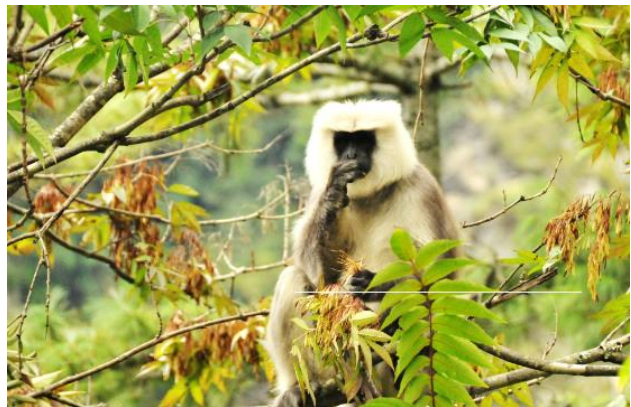
Day 9: In Chitwan National Park

Breakfast is served al fresco beneath the shady mango trees – fresh fruit , yoghurt , eggs and bacon to get the day off to a perfect start. After breakfast, prepare for a river safari in the Narayani river. The outing commences with a nature walk or bullock cart ride through the riverine forest, followed by a scenic float down the river. Cruising on the wide expanse of the river, pockets of rapids propel the boats along as gentle waves lap at the sides. Sitting inside a hand - carved boat , keep your eyes peeled for a variety of birdlife and wildlife . Top of the list is the endangered fish -

eating Gharial crocodile and its more sinister relative, the Marsh - Muggers.

A Nepali - style lunch will be served back at the Lodge , after which you might want to head to the hammock with your book for relaxation . Later in the afternoon , when the weather is cooler and the animals become active , meet with our naturalist for a jeep safari in the national park to get a taste of the jungle. Donot hesitate to ask questions . The in-house naturalist are extremely knowledgeable on the animals and the history of Chitwan National Park. During the safari you will encounter wildlife such as different species deer, birds, monkeys , and the endangered one - horned rhinoceros and hopefully the elusive Royal Bengal Tiger.

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



Day 10: Drive Chitwan - Lumbini | Birth Place of Buddha (250 m) | Buddha - The Light of Asia

It is a 3-4 hours drive on the east-west highway from Chitwan National Park to Lumbini. By making an early start you will aim to reach Lumbini before Lunch, where you will transfer to Lumbini Buddha Garden Lodge for one night stay. This lodge offers simple en-suite rooms and is set in grassland habitat where there is some very good birdwatching – Sarus Cranes are found here, so be sure to have your binoculars ready!

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Lumbini is located in the south-central Terai of Nepal and situated in the foothills of the Himalayas. For millions of Buddhists the world over, Lumbini evokes the kind of holy sentiment akin to the significance of Jerusalem to Christians and Mecca to Muslims. Lumbini is the place where Lord Buddha – the apostle of peace, and the Light of Asia – was born in 623 BC. The site (Lumbini Grove) was described as a 'beautiful garden' in the Buddha's time and still retains its legendary charm and beauty. Recently, UNESCO declared it a World Heritage Site.



The farmlands of Lumbini have been identified as an important bird area, having high biodiversity and ecosystems unique to Nepal. Bird specialties include Sarus Crane, Lesser Adjutant, and Indian Spotted Eagle. Mammals that can be seen here include Nilgai Atilope, Asiatic Golden Jackal, Jungle Cat, and Grey Mongoose.

Accommodation: Lumbini Buddha Garden Lodge
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11: Drive Lumbini - Royal Bardia National Park (304 km | 6.33 hrs)

This morning you will embark on your day-long drive, westwards towards the Bardia National Park. Although long, it is a very scenic drive that will take us across the terai, through numerous small Nepalese communities and across several ranges of forested hills, including the Churia range. Once again you aim to arrive in Bardia late in the

afternoon from where you will transfer to your accommodation at Tiger Tops Karnali Lodge for three nights stay. Rest of your day you spend leisurely.

Tiger Tops Karnali Lodge is located on the periphery of Bardia National Park. An area of extraordinary beauty and abundant wildlife, a visit to Karnali Lodge is a journey of off-the-beaten path adventure.

Accommodation: Tiger Tops Karnali Lodge
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12-13: In Royal Bardia National Park

Note: Lodge Operation In-charge will organize your daily activities based on your interest and preferences.

Bardia National Park is the largest national park in the Terai, a beautiful, unspoiled wilderness of sal forest, grassland and alluvial washes cut by the many fingers of the Karnali River. Largely unpopulated, it is often described as what Chitwan National Park was like 30 years ago, before its commercial development. One can raft through the park for hours on end and not encounter another person.

Park Consisting of magnificent Sal and riverine forests, and extensive grasslands, the park's 936 square kilometers are home to Tiger, Leopard, Elephant, Rhino, a few Blackbuck, Spotted Deer (Chital), Sambar, Barking and Hog Deers, Nilgai, Wild Boar, Sloth Bear, Serow, Goral, as well as the Marsh Muggler Crocodile and the endangered Gharial. Nearly 400 species of birds occur in the park and during your time here you will hope to find such species as Great Black-headed Gull, Great Slaty Woodpecker, Crested Kingfisher, Wallcreeper, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Greater Racquet-tailed Drongo and Scaly-bellied Green Woodpecker. Bardia is bounded to the west by the Karnali River, the largest in Nepal, and this enables us to explore the park by raft, as well as by jeep and on foot. A

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network of game trails in the park allow one to explore the abundant wildlife of the jungle.

Early morning and late afternoon excursions by jeep to remote regions of Bardia offer good chances of glimpsing a Sloth Bear or wild Elephant as well as large herds of Chital. An inflatable raft trip down to the southern boundary of the park is a tranquil way of viewing the birdlife and water-oriented animals such as Smooth Otters, Marsh Muggers and Gharial Crocodiles. The Karnali River is also one of the best areas in Nepal to view the highly endangered Gangetic River Dolphin. It is also possible to leave the park and cross the Karnali by an impressive, but somewhat out of place, suspension bridge and take a hike up the Karnali Gorge along an old trade route. Here there will be the opportunity to meet traders with their pack trains of sheep and ponies carrying goods from northern Nepal and Tibet.

Accommodation: Tiger Tops Karnali Lodge
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14: Drive to Nepalgunj (89 km | 2 hrs) | Fly to Kathmandu

Depending on the time of your return flight to Kathmandu, there might be time in the morning for some last minute bird and mammal viewing.

You will make the two hour drive to Nepalgunj Airport, from where we catch your one hour return flight to Kathmandu. If the weather is clear, you will have another opportunity to admire the snow-capped peaks of the Great Himalaya as you head east past Annapurna, 'Fishtail' and Langtang. You will enjoy your last day in Magical Kathmandu 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. Or simply enjoy your hotel ambience & relax. In the evening enjoy 6-course dinner at Krishnaarpan Restaurant at Dwarika's Hotel, one of

Katmandu's excellent Nepali restaurants and farewell.

Accommodation: Hotel Yak & Yeti
Meal: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 15: Depart Kathmandu

Transfer to airport for your homeward-bound flight.

Meal: Breakfast

Includes

- Domestic flight Pokhara - Bharatpur
- Domestic flight Nepalgunj/Katmandu
- Transport services by one Air-conditioned Vehicle for all the transfers, sightseeing tours, long journey's as per the program. This includes all state taxes, Toll Taxes, parking, allowance for Driver, outstation overnight charges for the driver.
- Services of a English speaking Guide throughout the tour
- Entry tickets at monuments/ Forts/ Palaces/National Parks/during the sightseeing tours included in the program.
- Jeep Safari/Boating and all Jungle Activities
- Porterage of Baggage at all the hotels, airports.
- Assistance of our representatives at all main cities in Nepal.
- Meals as listed
- Twin room sharing accommodation at hotels mentioned or similar

Excludes

- International flights
- Visa fee
- Travel insurance
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary

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- Personal clothing & equipment
- 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 Manaslu, Kathmandu

Hotel Manaslu located in the immaculate area of Lazimpat, Kathmandu is a heritage hotel established in 1972. We have kept the proud heritage of Nepal alive throughout its operation by offering unparalleled service and warm hospitality, that defines the values and culture of Nepal. The architecture of our hotel includes many ancient pieces that have been carefully restored and incorporated.

The Famous Farm, Nuwakot

A rural heritage hotel ideally located in the heart of a rural nirvana. Nestled in the Himalayan foothills, The Famous Farm house has been lovingly restored to its former glory that never fails to charm its guests with rustic flavor and character. Truly a perfect place to slow down, unwind and simply be at ease.

Hana No Ie, Astam

Hana No Ie is a permaculture resort and farm in Astam village some 17 km northwest of Pokhara. Located on a hillside facing to the Himalaya, "Hana No Ie" provides 180° panoramic views of Annapurna Mountain range, downhill rivers and villages. Its 5-hectare farm lies on the slope of the hill from south to north, providing seasonal and organic vegetables.

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.

Lumbini Buddha Garden

Lumbini Buddha Garden is a quiet and tranquil hotel in Lumbini close to the birthplace of Buddha, at Lumbini. Its semi-natural garden boasts a private haven of tranquility, offering a 'buffer zone' from the outside world for visiting guests. Here, one finds an environment to meditate and relax in peace, as well as learning about Buddhism should guests wish to do so.

Tiger Tops Karnali Lodge, Bardiya

Karnali Lodge, world away from the chaotic hustle of Kathmandu, is an intimate lodge with ultra personal service and expert wildlife guiding. We've created a calming, soothing escape with a focus on our natural surroundings. Our rooms are in keeping with local architecture, our on-site farm produces fresh organic produce and the property has a strong focus on environmental practices.



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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.

Internal/Domestic Flight/s

Please note that sometimes due to bad weather conditions (usually in winter and in rainy season) at Kathmandu, Pokhara and Nepalgunj airport 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

On this trip you will be traveling privately with your family & friends. 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.

Accommodation - Hotel, Lodge, Resort

In the beginning of your tour, you spend a few nights in a heritage Manaslu hotel before heading to Nuwakot where you will be staying at The Famous Farm. From Nuwakot your next stop is at Hana No Ie Resort in Astam Village, Pokhara before heading to Tiger Tops Tharu Lodge which is situated in close proximity to Chitwan National Park. Next, we head to Lumbini, birth place of Buddha, where you will be staying at Lumbini Buddha Garden Lodge. Before returning to Kathmandu you will be staying in Tiger Tops Karnali Lodge and on your return to Kathmandu you will be staying in a fine 5 star Yak & Yeti Hotel.

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

Unless a single supplement is requested, we offer double room (sharing) accommodation throughout this trip.

Food & Transport | Eating & Drinking

Only breakfast is included in Kathmandu, and breakfast & dinner in Nuwakot, and all meals (Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner) in rest of the places.

Drinking Water

Staying hydrated is important when undertaking any physical activity and it is more so while you are on a vacation and constantly engaged from one activity to another. We strongly encourage you not to buy bottled water as much as possible on your trip as this contributes to the growing problem of plastic pollution in Nepal. 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. Or simply refill your water bottle every morning before leaving your hotel.

Transportation

For airport and sightseeing transfers, we use a private car/vehicle. And for the long drives we use private a/c car, jeep or a Hiace depending upon number of participants. Flights from Pokhara to Kathmandu will be usually in an ATR plane.

Weather

The main travel season in Nepal is from mid-September to end-May. During rainy season we do not operate this trip due to obvious reason.

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Daytime average temperatures will vary from 15°C to 33°C in the Kathmandu Valley to around 20°C to 35°C in plains of Nepal.

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

Winter: December to end February. Despite the colder conditions, this is also an ideal time to travel 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 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. 3/4 season jacket for winter departures, light jacket for fall/autumn and for spring departure just a wind breaker would be sufficient
2. 1-2 x 1 liter water bottles (ideally with a wide opening).
3. Waterproof synthetic or leather walking/tennis shoes/sneakers (worn in)
4. Windproof jacket
5. Trainers for the evening
6. Hat, Scarf/Buff (which can be pulled over your nose and mouth to protect against dust, traffic smog)
7. Warm gloves (for winter months)
8. Walking socks

9. Tracksuit or thermals for the evening
10. Warm mid-layer (fleece)
11. Light - mid weight trousers (warmer for winter)
12. Shorts or skirt for women
13. Sunhat, sunglasses, sunscreen and lip salve with sun protection
14. Daypack
15. Small personal first aid kit
16. Plug adaptor

Optional Equipment

1. Water treatment: SteriPEN / water purification tablets
2. Hand washing gel
3. Biodegradable soap/shampoo
4. Sleeping bag liner
5. 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 from Pokhara 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 limit as long as you are happy to pay an excess luggage charge (approx. €2 per kg).

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

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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)

Electricity

Nepal's Electricity:
230V, 50Hz. Electric 'load shedding' (temporary

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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 and Pokhara. 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.