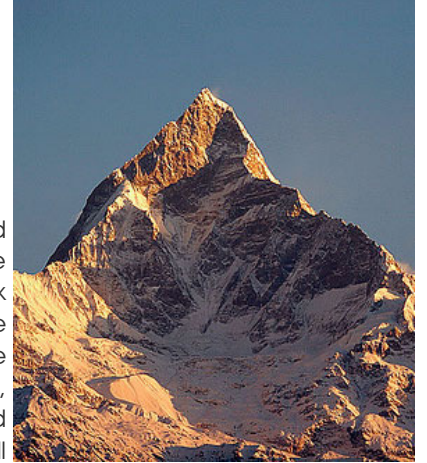


incredible indian tours nepalese experience

trip-validity: 1/1/2011—31/12/2011

This is a sensational adventure into Nepal. A land of mystery and tradition, mystics and mountains, rivers and jungles. Join us as we explore the ancient towns and villages of the Kathmandu valley, spend time in hilltop villages with magical mountain views at dawn. Trek through the jungle searching for rhinos and tigers - on elephant back and by jeep. Raft the whitewaters of primordial rivers. Chill out in laid back Pokhara surrounded by the most picturesque lakes and mountains. Take a mountain flight into the heart of the majestic Himalayan ranges, and spend a couple of days trekking through the spectacular Nepalese mountains. Above and beyond all of this, you will experience a unique culture with some of the friendliest people you will ever meet.



highlights

- o soak up the atmosphere of the timeless town of **Bhaktapur**
- o stay in a charming **farmhouse** on a terraced hillside in Nuwakot
- o experience the excitement of **white water rafting** down the Trisuli River
- o be on the lookout for **Rhino's** in Chitwan National Park
- o step back in time in a beautifully restored **Newari mansion** in Bandipur
- o chill out in the spectacularly situated lakeside town of **Pokhara**
- o trek amongst stunning **mountain scenery** of the Annapurna range around Khagbeni
- o enjoy an exhilarating Himalayan **mountain flight** out of Jomson
- o thrill to the charms of the quaint yet buzzing and cosmopolitan **Kathmandu**

itinerary disclaimer

The itinerary attached is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly during the tour. Occasionally itineraries need to change as we travel to allow for on the ground problems with transportation, booking issues and travelers desires.

itinerary (14 nights/15 days)

Day 1 Kathmandu (Bhaktapur)

Arrival Day. We meet at 6pm to have a brief chat about our tour before heading out to dinner in Bhaktapur.

Day 2 Bhaktapur

The Kathmandu Valley is made up of three towns - Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur. Once the capital of the Kathmandu Valley, Bhaktapur is the most unchanged of the three cities. Retaining the glorious medieval atmosphere, with a uniquely magical ambience, Bhaktapur embodies the essence of Newari culture. We spend the day sightseeing in the World Heritage town of Bhaktapur and the nearby temple of Changu Narayan. Changu Narayan, the oldest temple in the Kathmandu Valley with a stone inscription dating back to the fifth century offers sixteen hundred years of Nepalese art history. One of UNESCO's least known conservation projects, this exquisite temple sits overlooking the holy Bagmati river.



Durbar Square

Days 3 - 4 Nuwakot

We travel by private vehicle today (3½ hours) to Nuwakot 600m up into the hills surrounding the Kathmandu Valley. At 2000m, the breathtaking world of Himalayan



Nuwakot

views and the sights and sounds of rural Nepal surround us as we journey into the central Himalayan region of the Langtang Himal.

An ancient fortified town at a once important trading route stop overlooks a fertile river valley whilst the mountains above tower over. A manor house and cottages form a farmyard stay that affords us a glimpse of a fascinating and colourful history.

Awaken to majestic Himalayan views before a day in and around Nuwakot exploring the village and traditional way of life in this part of Nepal. Historically important, the unification campaign of King Prithvi Narayan Shah in the 18th Century was led from here. Nuwakot's saddle-back position provided impressive defenses in three directions and the town is named after being the most important of nine forts protecting the trade route between Nepal and Tibet. Significant palaces, temples and other spectacular buildings remain today creating one of the most important heritage sites of Nepal.

Day 5 Chitwan National Park

Heading west and south, we travel 2½ hours to the Trisuli river where we spend the morning White-water rafting. Rafting the Trisuli is a thrilling and fun, truly Nepalese experience. The Trisuli has its origins in Tibet and over the eons, gorges have formed that gradually eased out to a more meandering style, perfect for whitewater rafting, through valleys of terraced farms and small hamlets. Like every river in Nepal, the Trisuli is revered as the mother 'Ganga' as it heads further south to the Indian plain to merge with the wide, muddy, sluggish Ganges.

If the white-water thrill is not your style, you might prefer to spend your time relaxing around Beach Camp, where you'll find the Garden of Streams and Big Fig, a huge spreading Banyan tree with aerial roots. There's also a typical Nepali trail bridge which links both shores of the Trisuli and acts as a carriageway for both goods and pedestrians.

After lunch by the sandy banks, we drive 2½ hours to the fertile lowlands and to Chitwan National Park.

Chitwan National Park lies at the foot of the Himalaya on the plain known as The Terai. The National Park is 932 square kilometres of virgin forest, grasslands and lakelands on Nepal's border with India. This is the habitat of the Bengal Tiger (only sometimes seen), the rare Asian Rhino, the ferocious Sloth Bear, a number of species of Deer, the Muggler and Gharial crocodiles, a myriad of birds and much other wildlife.



Rafting

Days 6 - 7 Chitwan National Park

Two amazing days of exploration await you.



Chitwan National Park

An elephant-back foray into the park provides an opportunity to study the rhino at very close quarters whilst a canoe river trip offers the chance to spot crocodiles and birdlife up close. We follow this with a visit to an elephant breeding centre/nursery.

A full day jeep safari (5hrs approx) provides another chance for wildlife spotting. The evenings have a mix of entertainment and infotainment – including an informative slide presentation by an old hand jungle expert to get your facts right about the flora & fauna of the region and the captivating 'stick dance' performed by a group of local tribesmen.

Day 8 Bandipur

The enchanting paradox of Bandipur is that although it is the definitive mountain town there is in fact nowhere else quite like it. An eagle's nest location, lazy walks through orange groves, simple architecture and utterly stunning pink-tinged Himalayan skylines at dawn and before twilight create a truly magical scene.

We travel 2½ hours to stay in an historic traditional Newari Inn that boasts stories of ancient trans-Himalayan trade routes and of store-rooms crammed with merchandise from the opulence of India and the grandeur of Tibet. Once a centre of exotic trade between the lowlands and highlands, it is this history that explains the prosperity and faded grandeur of Bandipur.

Take a relaxed stroll to explore the Bandipur environs in the afternoon – to the viewpoint, a local school, a village hospital and the settlements for an insight into the typical lifestyle of the rural middle hills.

Day 9 Pokhara

We travel to Pokhara today where you will have the opportunity to explore the town, shops or check out some of the sights – Temples, Tibetan settlements and more.

However, Pokhara is more famous for its picturesque lakeside location and its close proximity to the Annapurna mountain range. A decidedly touristy town, Pokhara is still small, charming and very laid back. At just under 900m altitude, the weather in Pokhara is balmy and just right for sitting relaxing in a lakeside café or taking a boat out on the lake.



Phewa Lake Pokhara - Annapurna Range behind

Day 10 Kagbeni



Kagbeni

A truly Nepalese Himalayan adventure awaits us as we take an adrenaline filled morning mountain flight to Jomsom (altitude 2700m), the major town in the region - the legendary kingdom of Mustang. We trek through the spectacular surrounding environ & villages to Kagbeni (2810m - 3-4 hours) - a green oasis in the middle of a desert, an erstwhile junction on the ancient Trans-Himalayan trade route and the gateway to the restricted region of Upper Mustang.

The relatively gentle trail follows the Kali Gandaki river which forms the deepest ravine in the world. On one side lies the Annapurna range, on the other Dhaulagiri. Between the two ranges there are views of 8 of the 20 highest mountains in the world. The scenery of the trail ranges from forests of brilliant red rhododendrons to rocky cliffs and desert.

Wandering in Kagbeni, you'll lose yourself in a fascinating labyrinth of lanes, interspersed with 'chortens' and prayer wheels and lined by seemingly crumbling, mud-walled houses with red-bordered windows and ground floor stables. This is an ancient place, yet alive with residents, visitors, pack animals and horses filling the lanes, whilst children play about. After lunch you have the chance to explore the

village visiting the 15th century monastery and the ruins of the ancient fortress dating back to the days of the Tibetan invaders.

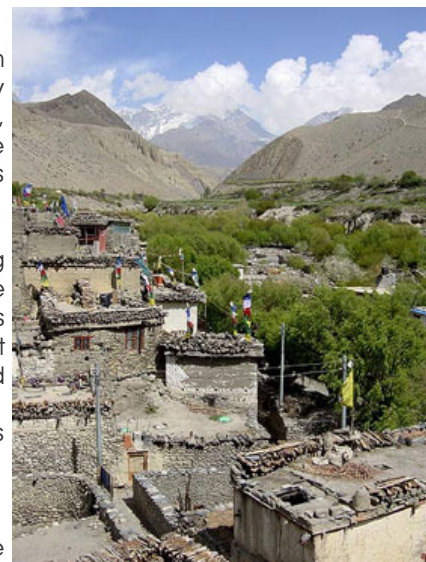
If the morning trek has inspired you, you can spend the afternoon hiking to Tirigaon, another gem of an ancient village, or to the Golden Hill, if you really want to test your physical condition and be aptly rewarded by the view from atop the hill.

Day 11 Jomsom

Even more remote than Tibet, and for many years closed to outsiders, Mustang has only in recent times been opened up to foreigners. Even today, entry to the Upper Mustang is heavily regulated with special permits required. Mustang was once an independent kingdom, although closely tied by language and culture to Tibet. The monarchy still survives as the Kingdom of Lo in Upper Mustang, with its capital at Lo Manthang. The Raja (or *Gyelpo*) traces his lineage back to Ame Pal the warrior who founded the Buddhist kingdom in 1450.

We trek today (5-6 hours) back towards Jomsom with a detour to the village of Lupra. Following the course of the Panda Khola stream, we reach Lupra, one of the oldest settlements of the region with its old world charm still intact and surviving. We visit the Lupra monastery which was founded in the 12th century by Lupragpa, a famous Bon master. Bon is the ancient shamanist faith once prevalent in Tibet and adjoining Himalayan territories which was later incorporated into the mainstream Tibetan Buddhism.

Lupra (2790m) is an interesting offbeat side-trip; few trekkers make it here but the village, with its adobe houses and traditionally clad inhabitants is worth a visit.



Jomsom

Day 12 Pokhara

We have another exhilarating mountain flight back to Pokhara where you have the rest of the day free to explore.

Phewa Lake offers the chance of serene boat trips, whilst a climb up to the nearby World Peace Pagoda will test the limbs and lungs. Go bargain hunting for trinkets and souvenirs in the markets at the Tibetan Refugee Camp, marvel at the lake water disappearing down into a pit-less gorge at Devi's Fall, or widen your knowledge base at the impressive International Mountaineering Museum.

Days 13-14 Kathmandu

A short flight on the morning of day 13 returns us to Kathmandu where we spend the afternoon exploring the sights of this charming quaint capital city small enough to walk around on foot.

The labyrinthine backstreets and alleys lead from one bazaar or square to another, and to the many sided and colourful circus of Durbar Square and the Hanuman Dokha (the Royal Palace). We also experience the extraordinary presence of the 'Great Stupa' at Boudhnath, a place of pilgrimage for all Tibetans.



Bodnath Temple

You will have plenty of free time to explore more of the sights of Kathmandu and nearby Patan, Holy Pashupatinath – the most revered



Mount Everest

place for Hindu's in all

Nepal draws pilgrims, sadhus and yogis from near and far and is also where the Hindu cremation pyres are situated. Often a challenge to our Western sensibilities, life and death are celebrated here with equal fervour. On a commanding hill overlooking Kathmandu and with stunning views of the ever present mountains to the north, Swayambhunath, significant to both Hindus and Buddhists is also known as the Monkey Temple, for the hundreds of monkeys who reside here, entertaining visitors with their monkey antics. Finally, enjoy the laidback atmosphere of touristy Thamel, famous for its pubs, clubs, restaurants and shopping or perhaps you'd like to see Mount Everest up close on an early morning scenic flight.

Day 15 Kathmandu

There are no organised activities for day 15. You are free to depart at any time.

general tour information

group size

10 maximum

days

15 days 14 nights

starts and finishes in

Kathmandu

price includes

Arrival and departure transfers

All accommodation as specified

All transportation between overnight stops and to and from included sightseeing

Entrance fees for all sites listed as part of the itinerary

Meals as specified

price does not include

Visa costs

Meals other than those listed

Drinks, meal tips, laundry and other items of a personal nature

International flights

accommodation

Guesthouses/hotels (14 nights)

This tour uses a variety of accommodation. From basic guesthouses to heritage inns and hotels, we experience a wide range of accommodation styles. Most hotel rooms are twin share with private bathrooms with western style toilets. During our Jomsom trek, accommodation is in simple 'tea house' inns with basic separate shower/toilet facilities.

single supplement

If you are a single traveller and do not wish to share accommodation, but would like your own room throughout the tour (not always available in Nuwakot or on the Jomsom trek), a single supplement payment of AUD195 (or equivalent) will be payable. Please note that often, you might be the only single traveler, therefore automatically getting a room to yourself.

transport

Private vehicle, plane, taxi, rickshaw, elephant, jeep

activities included

The following is a list of included activities on this trip. Other activities are optional and will be at your own expense.

Bhaktapur Square, Changu Narayan Temple (Bhaktapur)

Fort, Palace, Village walk (Nuwakot)

3 hour white water rafting trip (Trisuli River)

Jeep safari, Trek on elephant back, Canoe ride, Elephant breeding centre, Traditional cultural show (Chitwan National Park)

Guided 2 day trek with porters (Jomsom)

Durbur Square, Boudhnath (Kathmandu)

meal inclusions

14 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches, 5 Dinners

meals

Traveling with Incredible Indian Tours we ensure that you will experience a variety of the different gustatory treats available in Nepal. Generally, meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options. This allows you to choose where, and what to eat. More often than not however we eat together as a group. Your leader will offer suggestions for favourite restaurants throughout the trip.

money exchange

As at Feb 2011

AUD1 = 73 NPR

CAD1 = 74 NPR

EUR1 = 99 NPR

GBP1 = 116 NPR

NZD1 = 55 NPR

USD1 = 72 NPR

There are ATM machines (which accept both Cirrus/Maestro debit cards and Visa and MasterCard) in the main centres of Kathmandu and Pokhara. This is a safe and convenient way to access money in India, however we suggest that you bring some money as cash/travellers cheques in case there are times that ATMs are not available. The easiest currencies to exchange are USD or GBP. Only bring Thomas Cook or Amex Travellers cheques. Visa & MasterCard credit cards are accepted in major shops and restaurants in the bigger cities.

Foreign visitors are required to pay their airline tickets, trekking permits and hotel bills in foreign currency and you should have enough cash on you for your trek.

spending money

Although entrance fees to specified sites are included in the tour price, there are additional sights that you may like to visit. Some sites levy camera fees.

Spending money requirements will differ from one person to the next. You will need to take into consideration your spending habits when allowing for drinks, shopping, and optional activities.

You will need to allow enough money for the following:

Meals – AUD200 (or equivalent)

Optional Activities – AUD250 (or equivalent)

Money for drinks, shopping and incidentals.

Tipping is an integral part of Nepalese life and is essential to a smooth trip. To make things easier we cover tips for hotel room boys, local guides and for drivers of private transport we use. We do NOT cover restaurant tips. You will need to allow approximately 10-15% on top of your restaurant bill.

Tips—allow AUD30 (or equivalent)

physical rating



You may need to carry your bag/pack up and down hotel stairs. There will be plenty of walking

around towns or sites, and the weather will be quite hot at this time of year at the lower altitudes which will make general sightseeing a little more strenuous. Some trekking is included which does involve quite high altitudes and steep climbs. A good level of fitness will be required.

culture shock rating



Conditions in Nepal are not always as comfortable as in other countries. You may need to occasionally deal with a squat toilet, or the great outdoor loo (especially on the trek), cold showers or power failure.

travel insurance

Travel Insurance is highly recommended whilst traveling to Nepal and is compulsory for any group tour with Incredible Indian Tours. If you are relying on travel insurance provided through your Credit Card, take note that the policies are often inferior and may not provide adequate coverage.

visas

Most foreign nationals require a visa to enter Nepal. They are available on arrival and at embassies/consulates in advance. For information, or assistance with obtaining a visa, check out the following websites.

<https://visalink.com.au/frontpage.aspx>
<http://www.necan.gov.np/services.htm>
<http://www.travcour.com/>

health

We recommend that you consult your doctor for current medical travel information about before departure. Your leader will be carrying a basic first aid kit, but we suggest you bring along your own as well as any personal medical requirements .

The following websites have up-to-date information about health requirements.

<http://www.travelvax.com.au/>
<http://www.travelhealth.co.uk/>

communications

Internet cafes are commonplace throughout Nepal (even in the mountains, although prices in the hills can be quite exorbitant). Finding a café is usually not a problem, but speed can be. Connection times are often painfully slow, although this does vary from place to place. Roaming agreements exist with some international mobile phone companies, although coverage is sporadic and variable.

your group leader

Your group leader is there to organise and streamline your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. Whilst they are not a guide per se, they will share their local knowledge, give you suggestions for your free time and manage the day to day running of the tour. They will introduce you to their local friends and recommend great local restaurants and experiences. They will have a broad general knowledge of Nepal, so do feel free to tap into their wisdom. Local guides will join us throughout to provide an in depth insight into the history and culture.

responsible travel

We believe strongly in responsible travel. This includes being respectful to the local culture (ie dressing appropriately, and learning a few basic cultural do's and don'ts), being mindful of the environment, and leaving a positive image behind. Remember we are ambassadors for our country. Bringing a few photos of your family and home with you is a great way to interact with the locals by giving them a glimpse of your world whilst you visit theirs.

joining hotel

Bhadgaon Guesthouse
Tamaudhi Square, Bhaktapur - 11
Nepal.
Ph: +977-1-6610 488
Email : bhadgaon@mos.com.np

transfer/joining instructions

Your airport transfer pickup will await you holding a sign with your name when you exit the baggage claim area of the arrivals hall. There may be large crowds here so please look carefully for your transfer.

arriving early

Our home in Bhaktapur is a comfortable guest house situated well out of the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu. Surrounded by manicured gardens, and with views of the mountain ranges, Bhadgaon Guest House offers a wide range of facilities including a business centre, safe deposit and luggage storage as well as a fabulous rooftop restaurant and a beer garden.

Rooms are equipped with television, telephone and 24 hour running hot and cold water.

early arrival information

If you are arriving earlier than day 1, extra accommodation in Bhaktapur is available at AUD30/40 Single/Double (or equivalent) per night per room. Please notify us as early as possible if you require extra accommodation as rooms are always booked up well in advance.

finishing hotel

Shanker Hotel
Lazimpat, Kathmandu, Nepal
Phone: +977 1 4410151 / 4410152
Fax: +977 1 4412691
Email: sales@shankerhotel.com.np

staying on

If you are staying on in Kathmandu after the tour, extra accommodation is available at the Shanker Hotel in Deluxe rooms at AUD70/80 Single/Double (or equivalent) per night per room.

what to take

We will be on the move a lot, so try to pack as lightly as possible. The smaller your bag in Nepal the better, as the transport we use tends to have limited storage space.

Nepal is very conservative and we ask that you dress accordingly. As a guideline, shoulders and knees should always be covered. The wearing of shorts is looked upon by locals as akin to wearing your underwear and will limit your entry into mosques, temples and other places of worship. Loose, lightweight, long clothing is both respectful and cool. Singlets, tank tops and shorts are not suitable attire for Nepal .

laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by most hotels we use in the larger towns.

weather

The weather during our journey should be great. Daytime temperatures will be warm to hot, in the range 15-30 deg Celsius in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Chitwan and somewhat cooler up in the mountains. Warm clothing will be required for the trek to Jomsom as we are at altitudes of nearly 3000m and temperatures can get down to zero at night. Suitable clothing and trekking equipment can be easily hired in Kathmandu and Pokhara. Rain is not very likely at this time of year, but sun is, so sunblock and a hat are also essentials.

checklist

Travel documents: passport, visa, travel insurance (don't forget your emergency insurance contact details), air tickets.

Photocopy of above documents

Day pack

Health vaccinations/medication

First aid kit

Money: ATM card (widely available and easy to access in the main centres); credit cards (widely accepted in main centres); cash and travellers cheques (for emergencies)

Money pouch

Alarm clock and torch/flashlight

Mosquito repellent

Ear plugs can be useful if you are a light sleeper

Lock for your back pack or bag

Good hiking or walking shoes for trek

We recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt to store your passport, air tickets, credit cards and cash. Avoid bringing valuable jewellery with you. Some hotels we use may have safety deposit boxes.

Updated on: 28/2/2011