

TREKKING THE ANNAPURNA FAR AND WIDE



Trekking much of the Annapurna is not as comfortable as strolling hand-in-hand down lakeside in Pokhara or going for a stroll down Times square to bring in New Year's eve - this is an arduous journey that penetrates the heart of this mighty Himalayan region packed with sublime ecosystems that leave you flushed with awe; *'Trekking the Annapurna, far and wide'*, can be considered to be the king of all trips in the thrilling world of outback adventure...doing this trip upgrades you from a simple hiker into a 'MEGAHIKER' who can proudly say, 'I've seen it all, done it all' - and rightly so, because this journey will test your emotions and your mental strength to the core. This odyssey provides a whole assortment of diverse landscapes that can be equaled to any trip of similar duration, displaying before us every kind of scenery that Nepal's Himalayas can offer - the ecstatic views of the Annapurna massifs and towering Dhaulagiri surrounded by dissimilar geographies that range from the sub-tropical through high alpine country with barren like deserts akin to Tibet leaves you morphed for a while. Our journey peaks on the classic 'Thorung La' at 5416m, and this is where we stand witness to that power of nature in all its hypnotizing beauty...and we thank God for being alive to see it, and remember it for one hell-of-a-long time to come... The climax of the trek is crossing the iconic Thorung La Pass at (5416m).

The Annapurna trails first saw the light of day in 1977. and since then thousands of enthusiastic backpackers have tread its paths, but doing a trip of this kind would only grace a selected few due to its physical challenges and the length of the trip. We have designed our itinerary with a few adjustments to give you enough acclimatization but ensuring you get to enjoy most of the loveliness found in this particular region. We clamber up the Marsyangdi Valley, before targeting the wild, exposed 5416m Thorung La (pass) that encircles the Annapurna massif. The contrasting vistas we encounter on the way amaze us throughout the trek. The trails commence and conclude in the verdant foothills of the Annapurna range that are sprinkled with Hindu villages. As we move north of the Great Himalayan Divide, we witness stunning changes where we penetrate bleak landscapes that remind us of Tibet and the lifestyles that are much linked to Buddhism. We bunk out in comfortable teahouses all the way and also get to interact with the local folks in their villages inhabited by different communities who are ethnic Mongolians and Brahmins who follow Buddhism and Hinduism. It's a fantastic mix.

This is an unbeatable introduction to hiking in the Annapurnas where we are warmly welcomed by the local folks throughout the course of our journey. Our walking takes us through oak and rhododendron forest where the merry chirping of birds fill

the air every where we go; our voyage effectively ends after we wade through the ABC, descending down through some pert villages that include the famous Poonhill and Ghandrung villages before we head back to the world renowned junction for this region – Pokhara– bringing a grand end to **Trekking the Annapurna, far and wide''with experiences that teach us that the best things we can bring home from traveling are the 'Stories'', and a more open mind that enhances our efforts to enjoy life for what it offers us...right to the hilt!**

 **Challenging**

Activity Levels:

For any trek at this level, fitness is most important and you may have to improve yours before departure. Most "C" grade treks are equivalent to extended walking in mountainous terrain at home, but usually at significantly higher altitudes; climate and remoteness can also play a part. Walking days are usually between 6 to 8 hours although there may be some longer days for pass-crossing or similar. Previous trekking experience is desirable but not essential if you are confident of your physical condition.

Duration:

26 days

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AT A GLANCE

- A strenuous Adventure...we hike a mixture of trails that are gentle and heady which extend into some of the most rugged territory on earth. It's a challenge you'd love.
- 20 days on fluctuating trails as the altitude levels rise to higher beauty of an exceptional kind...this is pure adventure at its best

Cost Includes

- Healthy meals during whole trek
- Quality lodge Accommodation in trek
- Flight Pokhara-Kathmandu return
- All airport transfers by Private vehicle
- Expert Local Sherpa guide
- Necessary Porters [1 Porter for 2 Person]
- Good quality accommodation in City on B/B
- MSTE kit bag and Group medical kit
- Trek Map and company t-shirt
- Private vehicle for ground transportation
- Trekking permits, TIMS and site entry fees
- Guides and porters pay, meals and insurance
- Full day sightseeing in Kathmandu on day 2

Cost Excludes

- International Airfare and Nepal Visa fee
- Travel & Health Insurance
- Lunch & Dinner in City (\$7-9 USD Per Meals)
- Any Alcoholic Drinks & Mineral Water
- Tips for Guide & Porter
- Hot Shower, Battery Charges
- Unforeseen Cost such as Flight Cancellation
- Any Other Cost, not mentioned in Cost Includes

ITINERARY

01 : Arrival in Kathmandu and transfer to hotel

If it's a clear day when you are flying into Kathmandu, then your tour begins right from the skies itself. The sights from the windows of our jet shows us glimmering snow-capped mountain peaks spread out down below us, giving us the first thrills of our just begun vacation, sparking off a whole reaction of unforgettable experiences that stay with us for some time to come. As soon as your plane hits the tarmac of Tribhuvan International Airport, **Mountain Sherpa Trekking and Expeditions** office representative and driver will be on standby to meet and greet you at the airport and escort you to your hotel.

The rep will help you check into your designated hotel, and after going to our rooms and refreshing ourselves we will be briefed about our daily activities. The rest of your time is free to move around the neighborhood and get familiar with your surroundings. In the evening we will meet our senior trek guide who will brief the group about details related to our trek. Your first overnight in the ancient city of temples, probably the most in the world. Breakfast

02: Full Day sightseeing of Kathmandu city Overnight stay at Hotel

After a good night's sleep and enjoying a hearty b/fast, we proceed for our tour of Basantapur Durbar Square. Recorded by UNESCO as a cultural World Heritage site, Kathmandu Durbar Square is a bunch of medieval temples, palaces, courtyards and streets that date back to the 12th and 18th centuries. within this square we will find Hanumandhoka Palace Museum, Taleju Temple, Kumari Ghar (House of the Living Goddess), Kasthamandap and other temples and buildings as old as the city itself; from here we head for a tour of the famous Boudhanath Stupa {said to be the largest in the world} and a major centre of Tibetan culture in Kathmandu. The stupa is designed to be like a giant mandala (a representation of the Buddhist cosmos).

We next drive down to Swayambhunath {**popularly known as Monkey Temple**} "Swayambhu" means "**self-created**" and refers to the myth that the hill sprung up suddenly from a great lake that once covered Kathmandu Valley. Our next destination is Pashupatinath Temple. This temple is dedicated to Hindu deity Lord Shiva and is said to be the most holy Hindu shrine in Nepal. We then wrap up our Heritage tour with a trip to Patan which is one of the three medieval cities in Kathmandu and a destination for connoisseurs of great arts. We return back to our hotel, refresh, and maybe do some shopping, have an early supper and retire to bed, most probably. Breakfast

03: Drive by a private car/tourists bus to Besisahar (760M) - Approx 5/6 Hrs

Our trek personnel will arrive at your hotel at 7am in the morning to pick you up. After a 7-hour lovely scenic drive (185 km) from Kathmandu, we reach Besishar. On arrival at Besishar we will witness some stunning snow-capped mountain panorama of the Lamjung Himal. Overnight at a guesthouse - B. L. D

04: Local Bus/Jeep (shared) drive to Syange -Trek to Chamje (1410M) - Approx 5/6 hrs

We do a 1-2 hours drive down to Syange, our start point for the trek. We then get set for our trek to Chamje. The trail drops steeply to Syange at 1,070m from Bahundanda. On the way, we can see a large waterfall (season permitting). After crossing the Marsyangdi River on an airy suspension bridge, we follow the river to the stone village of Jagat before climbing through lush forest to Chamje at 1,410m. Overnight at a lodge - B. L. D

05: Trek to Bagarchhap (2080M) - Approx 5/6 hrs

After breakfast, our day begins through a pretty rough trail following the Marsyangdi Rivers steadily uphill to Tal at 1,675m, the first village in Manang district. We do a traverse crossing a wide, flat valley. The journey continues up and down to Dharapani at 1,890m where we come across a stone entrance chorten typical of Tibetan influenced villages. Upon reaching Bagarchhap at 2,160m the typical flat roofed stone houses of local Tibetans can be seen along with the village surrounded by apple orchards and maize fields. Overnight at our lodge - B. L. D

06: Trek to Chame (2720m) - Approx 5/6 hrs

After b/fast today, it's an enjoyable walk as we continue to climb through forests of pine and oak. We pass through

Dhanakyu before coming to a thundering waterfall with clean gushing water. Further on, the Marshyangdi Khola enters a gorge and the path consists of steep stone steps. Pausing for breath, we can look back at the grand views of Manaslu. When the steep incline ends we follow a path amid magnificent rhododendrons to Ratamron and then continue on a gently rising path, crossing a stream before entering a pine forest. We then cut across a loose hillside to the hamlet of Kotho from where we can look straight up at nearby Annapurna II - a sight that tell us we are deep in the Himalayan mountains. From here the trail climbs through a fir and pine forest to Chame. Chame is the administrative headquarter of the Manang district. There are government offices, shops, and hotels found here. This is only a half day trek. Overnight lodge - B. L. D

07: Trek to Pisang (3060m) - 4/5 hrs

After a delicious b/fast, we see Lamjung Himal at (6893m) gleaming in the morning sun, and with this lovely sight, we set off for Pisang. The mountain disappears as we climb the path up the valley, passing a huge apple orchard. We continue through a fir and pine forest, climbing to a high, rocky area, as the opposite bank becomes an impassable cliff. From this point the valley becomes extremely steep-sided as we follow the path to Bratang. In earlier years, this area was the military station for troops who fought against the Khampa tribal revolutionaries.

The dilapidated buildings are the only reminders of that era. A short climb from the village brings us to a rock-strewn area where we cross a wooden bridge and follow a high, winding path, before crossing back to the right bank again. We now walk through a pine forest and as the forest ends, the valley changes from a V-shape to a gentle U-shape, opening up a wonderful landscape before us. We can see the east peak of Annapurna II as well as Pisang Peak to the north-east. Trudging along, we come to a long mani stone wall by a bridge and the lower village of Pisang. A steep, narrow path through a very dense forest will bring us to the dramatic curved rock face, rising 1500m from the river. As the trail opens up we are surrounded by majestic Himalayan Peaks. Overnight in Pisang - B. L. D

08: Trek to Manang (3440m) - 4 hrs

From Pisang, today we enter the upper Manang region, where we will notice a contrast with the landscape and vegetation. The cold, dry climate creates a much rougher environment. We also get to experience amazing views of the towering Himalayan Peaks that surround us. Overnight in Manang - **B. L. D**

09: Rest/Acclimatization in Manang

We spend a day acclimatizing in Manang. This is essential for the body because we've got some tough heights to overcome in the days ahead. The whole day we spend doing some fine day walks and viewing the splendid sights around the village. Towards the end of the day, we return to our accommodation for a night's rest. Overnight at our lodge - B. L. D

10: Trek to Yak Kharka (4200m) - 4/5 hrs

From Manang, we ascend up to Yak Kharka, which lies on the main circuit trail, and avoids backtracking to Khangsar. We descend from Siri Kharka toward Thare Gomba and in only a few minutes reach a trail junction. Again, we stay left and reach Old Khangsar after walking for a while. Khangsar is uninhabited except for occasional herders and during festival periods. We follow rock a wall north out of Khangsar. We walk further more until we reach a seasonal bridge in the Thorang Khola valley. We cross the river to the east band and ascend along for a while to a plateau. We then hike further more until reaching Yak Kharka. Overnight in Yak Kharka - **B L. D**

11: Trek to Thorong Phedi (4450m) - 4 hrs

From Yak Kharka, we climb to the next village of Tengji, with the awesome Annapurna Himal in view, while behind us we can see Peak 29 and Himalchuli on the horizons. We are now past the tree line and the vegetation consists of alpine grasses and scrub juniper. Climbing the path, past the summer village of Gunsang, we cross the Gundon Khola via a wooden bridge.

From here we can see ahead the mountains surrounding the Thorung La, which we are going to cross tomorrow. The trail fluctuates up and down for some time. As the elevation gradually increases, we soon enter an alluvial delta where there are yak pastures. An hour beyond this, we come to the small settlement of Letdar. Leaving Letdar, we climb gradually to a ridge before descending to the headwaters of the Marshyangdi and cross a wooden bridge. After a short ascent up the mountain path on the right bank, we follow a narrow trail across an unstable screed slope before descending to Thorung Phedi. B. L. D

12: Trek to Thorung-La pass (5416m) & Trek down to Muktinath (3760m)-7/9 hrs

We've got to start our journey pretty early today so that we could cross the Thorung La at (5416m) at an easy going pace. The trail is steep but well-trodden, as this trail has been used by the local folks for hundreds of years. As we continue, the gradient eases and after around 4 hours of steady climbing we reach the chorten and prayer flags of this great pass. The views up here are simply striking: from the snow covered mountains above, to the head of the Kali Gandaki valley below and the brown and purple hills of Mustang which spreads out before us, is a masterpiece of natural geography created by God as a gift to the world and its people. The descent to Muktinath is a tiring 1600m drill that goes down but it's compensated for with lovely views of Dhaulagiri. Eventually the moraine gives way to grassy slopes before a cool walk along the Jhong Khola Valley to Muktinath, with its shrines and temple. This is a famous pilgrimage site for Hindus. We spend our overnight at a lodge - **B. L. D.**

13: Local Jeep/Bus drive to Kalopani [2530m] - Approx 5/6 hrs

From Muktinath, we drive down for sometime to Kalopani via a new route toward Chokhopani village. On the way we bump into some traditional villages of the ethnic Thakali people. In addition to this, we visit the apple gardens and even taste a few. What is exciting hereabouts is the 360 degrees panorama of Himalayan peaks: Dhaulagiri, Tukucho Peak, the three Nilgiris, Fang and Annapurna I. From Chokhopani, we continue to Kokhethanti. On crossing a river, we come across the newly built road site before reaching Kokhethanti of Kalopani. Overnight at Kalopani - B. L. D

14: Local Bus/Jeep drive to Tatopani [1200m] - 5/6 hrs

We get a taste of the new roads by driving down to Tatopani from Kalopani. The journey is mostly downhill. We go through the bridge at Ghasa. As we get down to lower elevations, we emerge back into subtropical forests, lush with vegetation. We continue along Rupshe Chahara (popular waterfall). We drive down the east bank from Kopchepani via Garpar to a bridge at Dana. At Narchyang Besi, we get to see a powerhouse that supplies electricity in the area. We experience more villages in this area where we can observe the everyday lives of the local folks. Upon reaching Tatopani, we chill out with a bath in the hot springs - its luvla - **B. L. D**

15: A reserve day at Tatopani or this reserve day can be use before Thorung La if needed

We could simply pass our time strolling around Tatopani as this is a bustling village town close to the borders of Tibet. Maybe we could try some bungee jumping; it's a great thrill to experience. This is an interesting little town and there are many ways in which we could pass our time or just spend time at our lodge reading and preparing for the big climbs - **B. L. D**

16: Trek to Ghorepani (3190m) approx 4-5 hrs

From Tatopani, we hike at our pace further along steep trails. Nature displays exotic sight of majestic snow-capped mountain peaks, lush vegetation and rich plant life before us. We climb through rhododendron forest to Deurali [3100m] and reach a hamlet and cultivated fields. We then continue walking for 3 hours and finally we will find ourselves in Ghorepani. Ghorepani also houses lodges to provide food and accommodation to travelers. We bunk out at our lodge. **B. L. D**

17: Trek to Poonhill (3210M) & Trek to Tadapani (2560m) - 5 hrs

Today is one of those extraordinary days because we top off Poon Hill - an emblem of Annapurna region. To witness the regal grandeur of sunrise over the Himalayas, we make an early morning climb along the steep trail to the viewpoint of Poon Hill (3200m). Poon Hill is a box office viewpoint from where we are able to enjoy brilliant panoramic views of Mustang and Pokhara valleys including the closest views of more than 20 famous mountains including the close-up views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges. The snowy peaks of the high mountains loom above and around us shimmering in the morning light.

After enjoying ourselves at Poonhill with our video cams on overdrive, We head for Tadapani further along the trail showcasing rich rhododendron forests, splendidly cascading mountain streams and other magical vistas of nature that surprise us. After continuously climbing for 3 hours, we step on the territory of Tadapani at an altitude of 2590m. Tadapani offers the most awesome mountain views of the overpowering peaks of Annapurna South. We then crash out for the night at our lodge - **B, L,D**

18: Trek to Chhomrong Village (2170M) - Approx. 5/6 hrs

From Tadapani, we hike along the mountain path of stone steps, pass through a pretty hamlet, cross a suspension bridge and then we walk through dense forest of bamboo. Finding ourselves in complete isolation amidst the serenity of nature can be quite an experience. Our trek does not stop here. After trekking for a while, we approach teahouses at Jhinu where we can relax and enjoy a drink or snacks. We then resume our trek to the north, descending Daaulu and after having walked for five hours, we soon find ourselves at Chhomrong. From Chhomrong we can get gripping views of Machhapuchhare. There are many chalet-style wooden lodges at Chhomrong where we can get accommodation and food. **B, L, D**

19: Trek to Bamboo (2510) - Approx 5/6 hrs

We go by the same path down today as the trail drops by 1,700m to the banks of Modi Khola to Bamboo at 2,345m where there are several teahouse/lodges available to stay at. Overnight at a lodge - **B, L, D**

20: Trek to Deurali (3230M) - 4 hrs

We hike by bamboo forest which is damp and chilly and then ascend steadily with fewer steep sections. It is only after reaching Himalaya Hotel that the forest opens up and we are out in the sun again with astounding views of the glacial river below. It is a steep climb up through a much drier forest before reaching Hinku Cave. From here we can see the trail drop closer to the river before climbing again to Deurali, the most charming stretch of the day. The vegetation is sparser, allowing delightful views of the valley, the river below, and the sheer rock face cliffs above with bands of flimsy waterfalls. Overnight at a lodge in Deurali - **B, L,D**

21: Trek to Annapurna Base Camp (4130M) - Approx 4/5 hrs

As we hike the Annapurna circuit trail for 2 hours, we descend a small ridge branching out from the mountain pass to mountainside with widespread green terraced fields displaying serene meadows and lush abundant farming land.

As we reach Annapurna South Base Camp, we begin to eyewitness awe-inspiring pictorial landscapes, grandiose panoramic views of snow-capped mountainous peaks and varied Himalayan cultural settings tucked beneath the southern slopes of the Annapurna massif. This dazzling display of sweet nature is something we'll never forget. After this wonderful experience, we head down to our lodge - **B, L, D**

22: Trek down to Sinuwa (2340M) - Approx 6/ 7 hrs

It's much easier going down after our ABC foray. The path to Sinuwa passes through forests with varieties of rhododendron, oaks and bamboo plants. We should have no problem reaching Sinuwa in a single day from Annapurna Base Camp. We crash

out overnight at our lodge. **B, L, D**

23: Trek to Ghandruk Village (1940M) - Approx 6/ 7 hrs

As we check out of Sinuwa, our trail ascends slightly through forests to Ghandruk, a bustling village of the ethnic Gurung community who has their own dialect, culture, dress and traditions. Ghandruk is also home to many Gurkha soldiers. It is a well known destination for trekkers as it is known for its beautiful mountain views and also because it's just a stone's throw from Pokhara and Kathmandu. The afternoon is ours to visit the Annapurna Conservation Office, museums and explore the interesting village. Overnight at our teahouse lodge - **B,L, D**

24: Trek to Nayapul, Drive to Pokhara (4hrs). Half day tour of Pokhara City (2hrs)

Today we wrap up our trek at Nayapul followed by a short drive back to Pokhara. After reaching Pokhara, we check into our hotel, refresh with some drinks and snack, maybe even have a bath; and then proceed for a half day guided tour that will include visiting some beautiful places like David's water fall, Tibetan refugee settlement camp and Gupteshwar cave in a private vehicle with a professional guide. We also do some boating on the tranquil Fewa Lake. We then will have a relaxing afternoon where we can simply chill out with some cold beers. Overnight at the hotel - **Breakfast**

25: Transfer to Airport & Flight Back to Kathmandu, Transfer to Hotel

After b/fast, we hang around for some time before our flight, and in this spare time we can do some shopping. We then get into our vehicle and head down to the airport for our flight to Kathmandu.

On touching Kathmandu, our day is free to do our own things. For suggestions, you can do some valley shopping, or enjoy a thrilling scenic Everest mountain flight, or even mountain biking, there are a whole lot of other activities if you feel like it. In the evening we will have a farewell dinner in a traditional Nepalese restaurant with a cultural performance by the local belles. (Your guide(s) and an office staff will accompany you.) Overnight at your hotel - **Breakfast**

26: Drive to the Airport to head back to that lovely place we call 'home''

After b/fast, our rep and office vehicle will be on standby at our hotel to transfer us to the airport for our connecting flight home. Serving you was a wonderful joy and pleasure, we at Mountain Sherpa Trekking and Expeditions will cherish the bonds of our relationship created over the time you spent with us and we thank you for choosing us as your travel partner and for visiting this amazing country Nepal. This thrilling adventure in the amazing Annapurna region will give you lifetime memories of a vacation worth its weight in gold. Adios friends! Till we meet again. **Breakfast**