

# Nepal: Walking in the Himalayas

**Tour Style:** Worldwide walking holidays

**Destination:** Nepal

**Trip code:** NPWHW

**Trip Walking Grade:** 4



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

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Experience one of the world's truly great travel adventures with a trip to Nepal that combines traditional villages, golden temples, jungle wildlife watching, and astonishing views over some of the highest mountain peaks on the planet. Led by our expert local guides and a fully-qualified mountain leader you'll take on the Mardi Himal – a lesser-travelled trail east of Annapurna base camp that ascends to heights of over 3,500m above sea level. Highlights include visiting the pagoda-lined square of UNESCO-listed Patan, the chance to spot one-horned rhino in Chitwan National Park, and spending time in Kathmandu – Nepal's intoxicating capital city.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

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- Return flights from London Heathrow including baggage and transfers (flights available from other airports - price may vary)
- Guided walks with local leaders
- 13 nights' accommodation including 6 nights in Nepalese teahouse
- 13 breakfasts, 8 lunches & 11 dinners
- All sightseeing, tips, and entrance fees (as per itinerary)
- All in-destination transport

**Please note:** On days 4 to 9 inclusive we stay in traditional teahouse accommodation. Rooms are twin share, and we cannot guarantee single rooms. Guests may be asked to share with someone of the same gender within the group.

## HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

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- Following a Himalayan trail few tourists are aware of
- Exploring the Nepalese capital, Kathmandu
- Visiting the UNESCO-listed Boudhanath Stupa
- Soaking up sunrise views over the Himalayas
- A traditional Nepali cooking lesson
- The chance to spot rare one-horned rhino in Chitwan National Park
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 16 people)

## ITINERARY

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### Day 1: Depart The UK

Depart UK on an overnight flight to Nepal.

### Day 2: Arrival In Kathmandu

Your local leader will meet you at Tribhuvan International Airport to transfer you to your hotel where you'll have free time to relax before dinner. If you're arriving independently, your local leader will meet you in the hotel lobby at 6pm.

### Day 3: Patan Walking Tour

Our first full day begins with a guided walking tour of Patan. We'll explore the maze-like alleys and hidden courtyards of this fascinating area, rounding off in Patan Durbar Square – a UNESCO World Heritage site. After the tour we'll experience a Nepali cooking class where you'll learn how to create a range of delicious dishes that we'll dine on for dinner.

### Day 4: Transfer To Pokhara

After an early start, we'll set off in a private transfer to the lakeside city of Pokhara – the gateway to the Mardi Himal trek. While the journey will take approximately 7-8 hours it's a beautiful route with much to see along the way. Once settled into our hotel, should time allow, there'll be a boat ride across Phewa Lake followed by a short two-hour hike up to the Peace Pagoda for stunning views of the Annapurna massif, Phewa Lake, and Pokhara itself. We will then take a private bus back to the hotel, where you are free to explore and have dinner at a restaurant of your choice.

### Day 5: Mardi Himal Trek: Khande - Pitam Deurali

**Distance:** approx. 4 miles (6 km)

**Ascent:** 1,310ft (400m)

Today marks the start of our journey along the Mardi Himal, a lesser-travelled trail east of Annapurna base camp that ascends to heights of over 3,500m above sea level. Rising early, we'll drive to the trail head at Khande and begin our trek with a steep ascent through the jungle. Passing through typical Nepalese villages we'll enjoy a lunch stop at Australian Camp where on a clear day there are excellent views over the Annapurna mountain range. We'll then follow a slight incline until we reach Pitam Deurali and our accommodation for the evening - an authentic Nepalese teahouse.

## Day 6: Mardi Himal Trek: Pitam Deurali - Forest Camp

**Distance:** approx. 5.5 miles (8.5 km)

**Ascent:** 1,560ft (475m)

**Descent:** 250ft (75m)

Our next stop is Forest Camp. It's uphill walking through thick jungle for most of the day but we'll enjoy beautiful views of the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna ranges. We'll take it slowly and steadily, ensuring there is time to take in the scenery. With luck, we may catch a glimpse of some of the region's abundant wildlife, such as deer, monkeys, and many species of rare birds. We'll reach Forest Camp and our teahouse accommodation for the night by afternoon.

## Day 7: Mardi Himal Trek: Forest Camp - Badal Dada

**Distance:** approx. 3 miles (5 km)

**Ascent:** 1,550ft (470m)

We'll cover a short distance but with a steep climb today. Hiking through ancient rhododendron and juniper forest, we'll reach a plateau where we'll be rewarded with incredible scenery centred around Machhapuchhre (Fishtail Mountain). We'll have lunch at Low Camp before a sharp uphill ascent leads us to our teahouse in Badal Dada. The afternoon is yours to spend as you wish.

## Day 8: Mardi Himal Trek: Badal Dada - High Camp

**Distance:** approx. 2.5 miles (4 km)

**Ascent:** 2,000ft (610m)

Another short distance but across gentler terrain today. Weather permitting, we will have good views of Annapurna South, Hiunchuli, Gangapurna, Tare Kang, and Khangsar along the way. There'll be a stop at High Camp for lunch followed by an afternoon of rest, ready for an early start the next morning.

## Day 9: Mardi Himal Trek: High Camp - Viewpoint - High Camp

**Distance:** approx. 5 miles (8 km)

**Ascent:** 1,150ft (350m)

**Descent:** 1,150ft (350m)

The early wake-up call will be worth it today. After a quick breakfast, we'll embark on a torchlight trek to an elevation of 4,200m for the chance to see the sunrise over the mighty Himalayas. Watch as a new day dawns over the peak of Mardi Himal and if the weather is clear we'll also get up close views of Annapurna I (8,091m), Annapurna South, Hiunchuli, Gangapurna, Tare Kang, Khangsar, Annapurna III, and Machhapuchhre. Once the sun is up, we'll head back down to our teahouse to warm up, rest, and prepare for our last full-day trekking.

## Day 10: Mardi Himal Trek: High Camp - Siding Village

**Distance:** approx. 6 miles (10 km)

**Descent:** 5,560ft (1,695m)

Trekking poles are advisable today as we make the long, steep descent back to Low Camp. After lunch, we'll head southeast from the ridge through dense forest towards the Mardi Khola and Siding Village – our final stop

on the trek. Once we reach Siding it's time to celebrate our achievement and enjoy a final evening with our team of porters before parting ways in the morning.

### **Day 11: Return To Pokhara**

Travel by jeep back to Pokhara and the afternoon offers free time to explore, relax, or take advantage of the facilities in the hotel.

### **Day 12: Transfer To Chitwan National Park**

Heading south, we'll travel to the lush jungles of Chitwan National Park where we can experience a range of jungle activities. Seek out rhinos, crocodiles, and elusive Bengal tigers during a 4x4 safari, glide downriver in a wooden canoe, and keep your eyes peeled for herds of elephants and rare birds on a jungle walk.

### **Day 13: Jungle Safari In Chitwan National Park**

Today we will continue with our jungle safari activities, heading deeper into the national park and hopefully getting even closer to Nepal's amazing wildlife.

### **Day 14: Return To Kathmandu**

Departing Chitwan we'll return to Kathmandu where we will head to the northeast of the city for a guided tour of two UNESCO-listed sites. Pashupatinath is Nepal's most important Hindu temple but also one of the most important Shiva temples on the Indian subcontinent. Boudhanath is the religious and cultural centre for Nepal's considerable population of Tibetan exiles and is home to one of the largest Buddhist stupas in the world. Upon completing our tours we'll enjoy our last meal together at a rooftop restaurant overlooking the Boudhanath Stupa.

### **Day 15: Departure Day**

After breakfast, we return to Tribhuvan International Airport for our flight home.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

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### **Hotel Shanker, Kathmandu - Nepal**

The 19th century residence of the rulers of Nepal, the Hotel Shanker has been offering stays fit for royalty since 1964 when it was converted from lavish palace into a luxury hotel. Spacious rooms have recently been refurbished and come with all mod cons, while Renaissance-style décor, complete with antique furnishings and glittering chandeliers add to the opulent feel of this unique heritage hotel. The large and welcoming restaurant serves up extensive buffet meals and the lobby bar boasts ornately carved windows that are over 200 years old. As for facilities, you'll find an outdoor pool surrounded by manicured gardens, and a spa area offering a range of wellness treatments, perfect for indulging in post-walk relaxation.

### **Barahi Hotel, Pokhara - Nepal**

Small and friendly, the Barahi Hotel provides comfort and quality cuisine just a few minutes from the scenic shores of Phewa Lake. Sleek, modern rooms are kitted out in contemporary style and the chic restaurant area serves both local and international dishes to an excellent standard.

### **Teahouse Accommodation - Nepal**

Nepali teahouses are small, simple guesthouses that offer trail walkers a comfortable place to sleep, rest, and enjoy a hot meal. Due to their remote and high-altitude locations, teahouse facilities are often basic and hot

water is not always readily available. You should also expect shared bathrooms. Rooms are usually twins and you may be asked to share a room with someone of the same gender. Most teahouses have a communal restaurant area where trekkers usually gather to eat, socialise, or read.

## Sapana Village Lodge, Chitwan National Park - Nepal

Sapana Village is an environmentally conscious wilderness lodge in the heart of Chitwan National Park. Wake up to the sounds of wildlife in the trees with a stay in one of their comfortable jungle cottages, all of which come kitted out in traditional Tharu décor, mod cons, and a balcony or veranda. The restaurant offers healthy organic food made with fresh ingredients from their own yard and there are a wealth of jungle activities available to experience.

## USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

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### Weather & Seasonality

Holidays take place in the dry season, when visibility is good and temperatures are at their best. November is after the summer monsoon and the countryside is lush and green, with excellent visibility and generally balmy temperatures. In March/April temperatures are similar, although the land is dryer and visibility may not be quite as good. However, at this time flowers are in bloom adding wonderful colour to the landscape. The temperature can change quickly at any time of year, it can be cold at night and when the sun goes behind a cloud.

### Joining Instructions (With Flights)

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from a range of UK airports\* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email [reservations@hfholidays.co.uk](mailto:reservations@hfholidays.co.uk)

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

### Joining Instructions (Without Flights)

If you prefer to book the holiday without flights and make your own travel arrangements you will still be able to make use of the return group transfers between the airport and hotel, which are included in the cost of your holiday. You must contact us on [+44 \(0\)20 3974 8865](tel:+44(0)2039748865) or email [reservations@hfholidays.co.uk](mailto:reservations@hfholidays.co.uk) at least 8 weeks before your holiday start date to provide your flight details if you wish to join the transfers. If you do not contact us, we will assume you are making independent travel arrangements.

If you are arriving ahead of the group, and are meeting them at the first hotel, please leave a message at the hotel reception for the HF Holidays' leader or local leader, detailing your room number, and a mobile telephone number if possible. The leader will contact you once the group arrives. If you are arriving after the group, a message will be left for you at the hotel reception, welcoming you and giving details of the time and place to meet the group.

## Essential Information

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

### Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top

- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

### Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags
- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

### Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device

## Safety On Your Holiday

Once you have made your booking, you will receive a pre-holiday questionnaire where we ask for details of next of kin and insurance details. **You must complete and return this to us - we need to have this from you at least 10 weeks before travel.**

Please also inform us of any medical situation which may affect your enjoyment of the holiday. This is important because our leaders must consider both group and individual safety at all times.

Whilst out with the group, we respectfully request that you:

- Please listen to any safety instructions and other directions from the leader
- Keep group members in view, especially if weather or visibility is poor
- Please stay where you are if you become separated from the group. The leader will retrace their steps to find you.

Each leader carries a first aid kit but is not allowed to supply any medication including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream. You may wish to bring these items with you in your own kit (see Suggested Kit List).

In the unlikely event that your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call emergency services on 911. Please then call our emergency number (sent in your final dispatch) and let us know there is a problem.

## Dietary Requirements

Please contact us as far in advance as possible if you have any specific dietary requirements and we will do our best to meet your needs.

If you require a specific meal on the flight, please let us know as soon as possible, and no later than 96 hours before travel.

## Vaccinations & Health

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see if any health precautions are needed.

The following websites provide a wealth of information on travelling and health: [NaTHNaC - Home \(travelhealthpro.org.uk\)](#); [www.redplanet.travel/mdtravelhealth](#)

Vaccines: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Tetanus & Polio vaccinations are recommended. Cholera, Malaria and Rabies are sometimes recommended too.

## Passports & Visas

### Passports

A full passport valid for a minimum period of six month from the date of entry.

### Visas

Visas are required to enter Nepal by British Passport holders, as well as many other nationalities. They are best obtained in advance through the Nepali Department of Immigration online here: [Online Services \(immigration.gov.np\)](#)

It is also possible to obtain visas on arrival at the airport in Kathmandu by filling out documentation in the arrivals hall, however it can take time completing the form and queueing. We recommend completing and printing the form out in advance here: [Online Services \(immigration.gov.np\)](#). One passport photo must be provided together with the completed application form. A single-entry visa currently costs US\$30 or US\$50 for 15 or 30 days respectively.

## Useful Information

### Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so, and advise us of the insurance company and policy number.

We work with Campbell Irvine to provide you with competitive single and annual multi-trip insurance. Please see our website for more information and details of how to contact them for a quote: <https://www.hfholidays.co.uk/about-us/booking-information/insurance>.

For more information about healthcare abroad and its costs, please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/>.

If you are arranging your own travel insurance, please ensure it is adequate for your specific itinerary. For this holiday, insurance should include cover you for walking at altitudes over 3,500m - the highest point on the trek goes up to 4,200m.

If your bag or its contents are damaged or lost while in the airline's care, this should be reported to the baggage service agents at the airport on arrival. They will assess the damage; in some cases, the airline may



decide to settle your claim immediately.

You will be given a reference to quote to your insurance company if an immediate settlement is not possible - in many cases, baggage claims can only be accepted in writing. A baggage claim form must be obtained from the airport.

### **Modest Dress**

On your trip we advise you to dress modestly and respectfully. Both men and women should aim to cover their shoulders and knees, especially if visiting religious sites or rural areas. Opt for loose-fitting and conservative clothing to show respect for local customs and traditions.

### **Tea House Sleeping Equipment:**

A 4-season sleeping bag will be provided whilst on tour to take with you during your stay in the tea houses.

Should you prefer to bring your own sleeping bag, you are welcome to do so. The pillows provided in tea houses can be hard textured, therefore we would advise you to bring a blow-up/camping pillow with you in addition.

### **Day Pack:**

It is advisable to bring a day bag (around 30 litre capacity) for your personal items that you will carry while trekking.

Additionally, you will be provided with a duffle bag for your personal items, to be carried by a porter (up to 10kg), when trekking between tea houses.

### **Local Currency**

In Nepal the currency is the Nepalese Rupee (Rs). The import of local and Indian currency is prohibited. Away from major centres Rs500 & Rs1000 notes can be difficult to exchange, please carry some smaller notes. Credit cards are widely accepted in the towns, but cash will be required for any personal expenses during the trek.

### **Local Time**

Nepal GMT + 5.45 hrs

### **ATM Availability**

ATMs are available in Kathmandu & Pokhara.

### **TRIP NOTE VALIDITY**

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These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the



itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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