Nepal: Walking in the Himalayas



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Small group holidays	Nepal	7	2663kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

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 Tour Manager and qualified mountain guides 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 YOU'LL LOVE

- Getting off-the-beaten track on a Himalayan trail few tourists know
- Exploring the Nepalese capital, Kathmandu
- Visiting the UNESCO-listed Boudhanath Stupa
- Soaking up sunrise views over the Himalayas
- Enjoying a traditional Nepali food cooking lesson
- Spotting rare one-horned rhino in Chitwan National Park
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 16)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Local Tour Manager who leads walks
- Assistant walks leaders & local city guides
- One porter for every two guests on the trail
- 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
- Return flights from London including baggage and transfers

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 **Depart the UK**

Depart UK on an overnight flight to Nepal.

Day 2 **Arrival in Kathmandu**

Your local Tour Manager will be waiting to greet you on arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport. After transfer to your hotel, there will be free time before meeting up for a welcome briefing with your Tour Manager. We will then take a short walk to a traditional Daal Bhat restaurant for dinner.

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. On arrival in Pokhara we check into the hotel and freshen up before stretching our legs with a walk along the lakeside. The evening is free to for you to explore at leisure 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)

Sleeping altitude: 6,290ft (2,100m)

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)

Sleeping altitude: 8,202ft (2500m)

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: 1,476ft (450m)

Sleeping altitude: 3,182ft (2,970m)

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)

Sleeping altitude: 11,745ft (3,580m)

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: 1,150 feet (350m)

Descent: 2,133 feet (650m)

Sleeping altitude: 11,745 feet (3,580m)

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)

Sleeping altitude: 6,184ft (1,885m)

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

Distance: 1.85 miles (3km)

Ascent: 1,072 feet (327m)

We travel back to Pokhara and check into the hotel. After lunch we will take a boat ride across Phewa Lake followed by a short hike up to the Peace Pagoda for stunning views of the Annapurna Massif, Pokhara and the lake. We take a bus back to 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

This morning, we head out on a dugout canoe ride on the Rapi River with our expert boatmen/women. Often seen bathing or feeding near the water's edge are one- horned rhinos, deer, wild boar and sometimes elephants or even leopards. Disembarking we will take a guided walk through the jungle on a well defined trail. We return to our lodge for lunch and in the afternoon go for further wildlife spotting on a 4x4 safari.

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.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Moderate walking grade 7

The most active moderate grade. Longer distances and short but steep ascents and descents possible throughout the day. Hill walking experience desirable. Typically, 11-12 miles (18-19km) with around 1,800ft (560m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

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. Contemporary rooms have air conditioning, tea and coffee making facilities and small private balconies and when it's time to unwind, there's an outdoor pool surrounded by tropical gardens. Quality cuisine is served in The Flavour Dining room and nightly cultural shows are performed in the courtyard.

Sapana Village Lodge, Chitwan - Nepal

Wake up to the sounds of nature at the environmentally friendly Sapana Village Lodge in the heart of Chitwan National Park. Stay in one of their comfortable Tharu-style huts which are built of all-natural materials but with full modern amenities. There is an open-air terrace where you can enjoy a drink from the bar, while coffee enthusiasts can try organic Napali coffee. The restaurant offers healthy organic food made with fresh ingredients from their own yard. Sapana also provides a sanctuary for five rescued elephants whom you can meet on ethical activities that the lodge offers.

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.

SAFETY ON YOUR HOLIDAY

Safety information

Please 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.. 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

Vaccinations & health information for Nepal

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

Passport & Visa information for Nepal

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)

You can only apply for this online 2 weeks before departure.

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.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

Nepal is best visited in the spring and autumn. At both times of the year, you can expect warm, sunny days and cold nights, going down to freezing the higher you walk. Layers, water proofs and warm clothing are essential.

Essentials

- Walking boots with good ankle support and grip
- Walking sandals – light for evening use
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Lightweight t-shirts, trousers and shorts (below the knees)
- Walking trousers – lightweight – Zip offs are good
- Light tracksuit for evenings and/or sleeping
- Insulated jacket & fleece
- Neutral coloured clothes for Chitwan – grey, brown, green, black. No bright colours
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (2 x 1 litre – bladders not suitable)
- Headtorch/flashlight
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Lip balm with SPF
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Camera
- Travel towel (for trail)
- Wash kit – travel size and eco-friendly
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles – we suggest using them on the trail
- Swimwear
- Snacks for on the trail
- Dry bags
- Rubbish bag & toilet roll
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Small mat for rest stops or picnics when walking

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email 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)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

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 before you travel.

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

Ticks information

Ticks are tiny creatures that live in vegetation and can attach themselves to passing animals or walkers and may carry a risk of Lyme Disease. Please refer to NHS advice and guidelines for information: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/

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.

Luggage Information for Nepal

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.

Day pack for Nepal

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 advised 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

Local currency for Nepal

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

Local time for Nepal

Nepal GMT + 5.45 hrs

ATM AVAILABILITY

ATM availability for Nepal

ATMs are available in Kathmandu & Pokhara.

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY 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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