

# Nepal - Top to Bottom October 2024



## **Packing:**

Please bring lightweight easy wear clothes that are not precious. Whilst there is great laundry services around Pokhara they may not be used to washing clothes that need special care. Pack light, it will make it easier for moving about. You can buy everything you can think of in Nepal cheaply and easily. (It helps the local economy as well)

## **Visa:**

You can get your visas easily at the airport in Kathmandu, Govin and I will help you. You will need \$100 cash and that's all, they will give you change in rupees, usually around 3000-4000 which will cover your taxi cost from Airport to Hotel

## **Money:**

Please bring cash with you. We can exchange money easily at the many money change places. ATM's work in Nepal for up \$300 however the fees are up to \$14 a transaction so is best to bring cash. Most businesses still operate with cash. \$500-2000 cash should be ample, depending on how you spend. For the upmarket venues you will be able to pay with cards.

When shopping always barter. They expect it. So whatever the price, halve it and start there, then negotiate to about 70%. Never pay full price.

## **Food:**

Most of the areas you will be visiting you will be able to eat anything on the menu, please do not worry, Nepali food is great. Particularly the local cuisine. You can also order a huge variety of western dishes cooked well. Nepali chefs often work all around the world before coming home to open their own restaurants.

**WATER: VERY IMPORTANT: Do not drink any tap water or water in jugs in Kathmandu or Pokhara. Please ask for filtered or bottled water.**

## **Giving Money:**

Whilst travelling around Nepal please try to look past the obvious differences between our world and theirs and recognise the open hearted people that they are. You will see beggars and this can be hard to ignore.

My advice here is this:

If the person is disabled, it is ok to give small money. If you give big money you can be assured there will be someone else who will benefit.

If children are begging please tell them to go to their mothers and ask to go to school. It is important to understand many child beggars have run away from home and think that they can get rich being free on the streets, the reality is very different. By giving money to them we are encouraging this behaviour. The best thing for these children is to go home to their families. Nepal families are not as separate as ours and the community will help raise them.

Be aware every taxi driver and everyone has sob story (no different to us) and whilst we can listen and validate their hardships, please be careful not to let them take advantage of the “White Saviour Complex” that often finds its way into our psyche.

Besides all that, sometimes you will meet or feel connected to someone for reasons you can not explain and if that happens for you and you want to give, then by all means give, but be respectful and understand that if we can not sustainably continue the giving it may not be beneficial. So please think hard before making this commitment to someone in need.

**Weather:** Weather will be very warm around 20+ most days, the sun is not like here and you are less likely to burn, however do expect possible rain now and then. In the mountains it will be cold so you will need to pack layers. I will send through a more detailed packing list closer to departure.

**Little tips:**

There is WIFI everywhere at any venue.

Toilets you can use anyones anywhere, so just ask.

To say “thank you” = “Dhun YA Bud”

To say “water” = “Pun ni”

To say “food” = “kha nah”

To say “money” = “pie sah”

Speak slowly and clearly and most Nepali can understand basic English.

Do not wear revealing clothes, eg: short skirts, cleavage exposing tops or other such outfits in villages and temple areas.

## ITINERARY

30th September Arrive before 2pm

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Check in Nepali Ghar Hotel - with Kate and Govin)

2pm Walk to Hanuman Dhoka Square.

Dinner in Thamel.

**1st October -**

9am visit the Bhaktapur, beautiful cobbled streets and old buildings of the original city (old city of Kathmandu) Pashupatinath, Bouddanath Temple, Swayambhunath Temple (the monkey temple) Continue on route to Chitwan by Private Jeep.

**2nd Oct -** Wake early take jeep to Chitwan National Park

Jeep to Chitwan with Raju our driver, see the sights, (**Breakfast at hotel & lunch included Traditional Dal Bhat on route**). Explore the amazing ever changing landscape in this diverse country. Nepali roads can be slow approx 7 hours drive, so relax and let your driver do all the work as you take a gazillion pictures on route. Hotel TBA

**3rd Oct -** Go on a Jungle Safari, see the Rhinos, tigers, elephants

and more. Raju will show the Tharu people traditional dancing Chitwan is famous as it is near the India border and the animals move between the two countries due to the climate being extremely different to the middle area of Nepal. The culture in this area is very different to the middle and upper regions of Nepal as it is closer to India. Hotel TBA

**4th Oct -** Chitwan to Pokhara, Note the changes in the landscape as you drive approx 7 hours to Pokhara. Learn about Nepali time and Nepali roads. (**meals lunch only on route - traditional Dal Bhat**) - **Hotel Basanta Inn Pokhara**. Meet Jivan and Sabita and their family (Owners Basanta Inn). They will become like a second family. Anything you need they can help. ( you can leave excess luggage here for your return from the trek)

**5th Oct -** Pokhara - today is a free day - Meet Kamal - trekking guide (Govins Brother) at Basanta Inn to arrange trekking permits and discuss the trek. Last minute trekking shopping can be done here. Enjoy a walk along the Lake, grab a boat across to Barahi Temple in the middle of the lake. Feast at the many different cafes and eateries, get out and explore. It is safe as houses here. - **Stay at Basanta Inn Pokhara**

**6th Oct -** Start the day at 6.45am as we make our way by jeep to Kagbeni.

Pass through many rural villages and diverse landscapes as we make the winding journey off road in parts to Kagbeni the gateway to the Mustang Region.

When you arrive in Kagbeni, freshen up, have lunch then find Govin if you want to learn about the area and explore the Buddhist temple.

Feel free to stop and grab some Nepali chiya (tea) and snacks along the way at any of the teahouses and chat with locals. Once in Kagbeni spend time checking out the tiny cobbled streets, Buddhist monastery and grab some amazing pics of the local scenery and village life. Truly feels like you are in another world.

**7th Oct** - Wake up to the most amazing views. Take a coffee, grab some breakfast.

Find your own pace, meditate as you walk through the vast valley and take in the first glimpses of the Annapurnas. Great photography. Late Lunch and Dinner

Walk with Govin when you can, to learn of the history and stories of the region. Ask him about Shiva and the Muktinath temple.

Mustang is a unique place and truly feels like you are on Mars at times. Expect to walk for at least 5 -7 hours, 12kms and take your time, you will experience less dizziness and lessen your chances of altitude issues if you go slow and steady. Once we reach the village of Muktinath we will be at 3800m so everything moves slow here, including you.

Dinner is in the lovely Shambala Guest house.

**8th Oct - Early start** – The path follows the footsteps of millions of Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims over thousands of years. If you like you can do what the Hindus do and wash in the cleansing waters of 108 fountains and then offer a prayer to the Shiva God of the mountain. I will warn you though it is FREEZING... Those who have taken part always report a feeling of elation and lightness. The views are spectacular. At times the altitude makes the walking slow, but don't worry you can stop whenever you need to and take a rest. It's the perfect opportunity to Meditate as you walk focusing on your breath, the eagles as they fly above and the beautiful sparse country side.

Afterwards enjoy a hearty brekky before making the decent down the mountain towards Jomsom.

**9th Oct** - Enjoy a little sleep in, Leave Jomsom around 8am grab a cappuccino if you like before we go. As we head to the gorgeous village of Marpha. We meander off the path towards Dhumba Lake, such a pretty spot through a little village and then on the pilgrims path around the mountains to Marpha. Marpha, is famous for its apples and traditional looking ancient Mustang village. Amazing pics to be had here and lots of little nooks and crannies to explore. Climb the temple steps to get a great view of the village. If you are really wanting a challenge talk to Govin about the Hill climb directly behind the village to the top to touch the snow. Notice the tucked away homes that are dug into the mountains. Make sure you try everything Apple in Marpha. Talk to locals and explore the surrounds. Short walk today approx. 10-11kms

**10th Oct** - Marpha to Kalopani leaving around 7am

Today is the longest day enjoy the downhill trek through more unique villages, swing bridges and watch the landscape change rapidly. Approx. 7 hours walk 20-22kms, stopping along the way at tea houses. Take it slow today and stop whenever you need, bring snacks as there are not many shops along this route... however it is amazingly picturesque, at times you will feel like you are in Alaska or

Canada. This part of the walk it is best to walk together as there are many ways that you could take a wrong turn... Following the Kali Gandaki river, watch as she gets bigger along the way, and enjoy the amazing villages and people along the way.

**11th & 12th Oct** - Today we take the Jeep down the mountain, the last leg from Kalopani to Baglung. On arrival to Baglung we will go with Govin and Kamal to explore his home town. We will meet the family, enjoy Nepalese hospitality, home-cooked food. These days are usually unforgettable by our guests and they always report that it is an experience they will never forget. In the evening stay in a local hotel. This year you will experience the Dalai Festival with

our family. Expect dinner, dancing and dressing up. So bring a special outfit for this event or buy a local outfit and enjoy the colourful day.

**13th Oct** - We head to Kusma to stay in the Cliff top resort in clamping tents, crossing the highest swing bridge in Nepal. Jump is available here off the Swing bridge in the morning and a myriad of other activities for the adventure minded people. Otherwise enjoy the scenery and take a short walk to Govins grandfathers village. Ziplining, Bungee, Giant swing and more.

**14th Oct** - We say goodbye to the Reconnection Crew, however you can choose to add on other activities or head back to Kathmandu. Talk to us to arrange what you need.

Eg: Paragliding and massage day... YOUR choice.

Fewa Taal Boat cruise in the afternoon to relax and unwind, an opportunity to swim too.

3day/2 night Ayurvedic Yoga

**Included in cost;**

Jeeps - Private Jeep service

Hotel in Kusma and food

Hotel in Pokhara ( Basanta Inn)

Hotel in Kathmandu ( Nepali Ghar)

Entry fees

Transport

Govin and Kates love and undivided attention. Xxx

**NOT included:**

Taxis to and from Airport

Food except where specified.

Drinks (except in Govins Home)

Zipline/Bungee etc - TBA- optional depending on choice of activity.

Tourist coach Bus tickets to KTM or domestic flights.

Return Jeep to KTM if required

Flights PKA - KTM if required

International Flights