

ANNAPURNA DISCOVERY, NEPAL



walking in the Annapurna middle hills with Mount Machapuchare behind



HIGHLIGHTS

- A leisurely trek that allows ample time to enjoy the views and culture of the Annapurna region of Nepal.
- The trek goes to Poon Hill where, weather permitting, there are very good views of Dhaulagiri and the western Annapurnas.
- After the trek you visit Chitwan National Park, a region of subtropical forest which is a superb bird habitat, with over 300 species recorded. It is also one of the few remaining areas with the endangered Asian one-horned rhino. Other notable species include tiger, leopard, gariyal, sloth bear and Indian bison
- Roland, owner and founder of The Mountain Company, has led this trip before and modified the itinerary based on this experience. He will be able to answer any questions you might have



ANNAPURNA DISCOVERY

Total number of days	14 days
Grade & days trekking	Gentle, 7 trekking days
Accommodation	7 nights hotel, 6 nights teahouse lodges
2012 price from Kathmandu	£995 (US\$1,625)
Minimum group size	2
Dates	March 11 th to 24 th 2012 April 15 th to 28 th 2012 October 7 th to 20 th 2012 November 11 th to 24 th 2012 March 10 th to 23 rd 2013 April 14 th to 27 th 2013 October 6 th to 19 th 2013 November 10 th to 23 rd 2013



THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- Internal flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara.
- All transfers including airport collections.
- One day sightseeing in Kathmandu with Nepalese cultural guide and private vehicle.
- Twin share room at Hotel Tibet in Kathmandu, Hotel Barahi (or Trek O'Tel) in Pokhara and in teahouse lodges while on trek.
- Breakfast only in Kathmandu and Pokhara, all meals included while on trek.
- All trekking arrangements including permits and fees, Sherpa guide and porters.
- Two nights staying at lodge in Chitwan National Park with all jungle activities
- Annapurna trekking map given to you on arrival to Kathmandu.
- Rubberised luggage tags posted to you before departure.
- Financial protection insurance with International Passenger Protection.
- Pre departure support and advice from The Mountain Company by email, phone or face to face meetings in London. After booking with us we will send our comprehensive "Nepal Trek Information" notes.

THE FOLLOWING SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IS AVAILABLE:

Single room supplement £195 (US\$230)

Please note that if you are a single person booking on one of our trips you do not have to pay the single room supplement, this is only payable if you specifically request to have a room or tent to yourself. You will not have to pay this for this option if you happen to end up with a single room or tent due to odd numbers on the trip.



THE FOLLOWING IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- International flight to/from Kathmandu (London from £550).
- Travel & trekking insurance (eg. Snowcard).
- Nepal visa for 30 days at US\$40 (approx £25).
- Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu.
- Personal clothing & equipment, please see the Appendix for suggested kit list.
- Tips (guidance on amounts included in our “Nepal Trek Information” notes).
- Other items not listed in “What is included”.

YOUR COMPLETE FINANCIAL PROTECTION

In accordance with "The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992" all passengers booking with The Mountain Trekking Company Ltd (“The Mountain Company”) are fully protected for the initial deposit and subsequently the balance of all monies paid to us, including repatriation if required, arising from cancellation or curtailment of your travel arrangements due to the insolvency of The Mountain Company.



For further information about our financial protection insurance with International Passenger Protection please see Appendix 2.

PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Participants should be aware trekking, mountaineering and travelling in a developing country are activities that involve a risk of personal injury or death. As a



condition of booking you must accept these risks and be responsible for your own actions and involvement.

Adventure travel requires an open and flexible attitude. You may experience extreme conditions, unpredictable weather and last minute changes to the itinerary beyond our control. Lack of acclimatisation to high altitudes could also be a risk factor. Our itineraries allow optimum time for acclimatising although it is possible that some individuals might be slow acclimatisers.

The majority of our trips visit remote areas where you are away from normal emergency services and medical facilities. In case of a serious injury requiring hospitalisation, it has to be accepted by you, evacuation could take up to several days and may impede your ensuing recovery. Helicopters are the most usual means of evacuation, however they are not always available or they may be hindered by poor weather and flying conditions.

INTRODUCTION

This is a leisurely trek to the Annapurna region visiting Poon Hill for Himalayan viewpoint and Gurung villages.

We start by taking the spectacular flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara where you will get superb views of the Himalayan mountains. The Annapurna Discovery trek follows trails in the Annapurna foothills passing through pretty Gurung villages, terraced fields and rhododendron forests.

This is a leisurely trek giving you time to enjoy the views and the culture of Nepal. From Ghorepani village you have superb views of Annapurna, Lamjung, Dhaulagiri and Machapuchare (commonly know as Fishtail mountain). The high point of this trek is the walk up Poon Hill for the sunrise across a panorama of Himalayan mountains.

After the trek you travel to Chitwan National Park where you will go an elephant safari, bird watching and a jungle walk. Chitwan National Park is one of prime habitat of the Royal bengal tiger and has many other interesting animals and birds.



DETAILED ITINERARY

It is our intention to keep to the day by day itinerary detailed below, although there might be some flexibility due to local conditions or other factors beyond our control. If this is the case the trek leader will do everything possible to work out the changes to the itinerary in order to minimise your inconvenience.

Day 1. Arrive Kathmandu and join the tour at the hotel.

You will be met on arrival at Kathmandu airport and driven back to the hotel. Please provide travel plans on booking and we will arrange the pick up and transfer. A full briefing will be given in the afternoon. Overnight at hotel.

Day 2. Sightseeing in Kathmandu.

Today we explore Kathmandu with a good local guide, the day is flexible depending on what you would like to see but the most popular places generally are:

- Pashupatinath is a Hindu temple with burning ghats on the banks of the Bagmati river.
- Swayambhunath, also known as the monkey temple, is climbed by a long set of steps and has great views of Kathmandu.
- Boudhanath stupa has many traditional gompas hung with strings of multi coloured prayer flags, it attracts many Sherpas and Tibetans for the circumambulations of the stupa (koras).
- Durbar square, which is one of the old capitals of the Kathmandu valley, has a blend of Hindu and Buddhist temples.

Day 3. Fly to Pokhara, drive to Phedi then trek to Dhampus- 2 to 3 hours walking.

After breakfast, we take the morning flight to Pokhara. On arrival we drive to the road head at Phedi where you begin your trek up the trail to Dhampus which sits on a ridge with superb views. Overnight lodge.

Day 4. Trek to Landrung- 4 to 5 hours walking.

Today the trek continues through forest to Landrung which sits above a gorge with the Modi River far below. Tomorrow's destination, the Gurung settlement of Ghandrung, is visible on the hill opposite. Overnight lodge.



Day 5. Trek to Ghandrung- 3 to 4 hours walking.

Today you descend to the bridge over the Modi Khola river then climb up to Ghandrung. You can spend the rest of the day exploring the village with your guide. Overnight lodge.

Day 6. Trek to Tadapani- 4 to 5 hours walking.

From Ghandrung, continue upwards through Deorali and into the forest. Continue on through rhododendron forests and over a pass to Tadapani. Overnight lodge.

Day 7. Trek to Ghorepani- 4 hours walking.

From Tadapani the trail continues through rhododendron forest until we get to Ghorepani for lunch. Overnight lodge.

Day 8. Early morning climb to Poon Hill and then trek to Birethanti- 4 to 5 hours walking.

Wake up early to make a pre-breakfast excursion to Poon Hill where, weather permitting, there are very good views of Dhaulagiri and the western Annapurnas. Return for breakfast.

Start off down the ridge to Ulleri and descend the steep stairway to the Burungdi River. Tirkhedhunge lies at the foot of the cliff and then the trails moves up and down through Hille skirting fields and forest along the river to reach the charming village of Birethanti. Overnight lodge.

Day 9. Trek to Nayapul, transfer to Pokhara- 2 hours walking.

A short walk to the roadhead at Nayapul and an hour's car ride will bring you into Pokhara. Rest of day free on your own. Overnight hotel.

Day 10. Transfer to Royal Chitwan National Park.

In the morning we drive to Chitwan National Park. In the afternoon we will ride on an elephant in to the National Park. There is a variety of animals including one horned rhinoceros, deer, wild boar and if you are very lucky a tiger.

Day 11. Chitwan National Park.

We have a full day of activities starting with an early morning elephant ride into the National Park for game viewing. On getting back to the lodge we have breakfast on the verandah overlooking the Rapti river. Next we take a dug out canoe to visit the



crocodile conservation project. After lunch you have the chance to take an elephant shower where you will be sprayed with water from their trunks!

Day 12. Drive back to Kathmandu.

Drive back to Kathmandu arriving back in the late afternoon. Overnight Hotel Tibet.

Day 13. At leisure in Kathmandu.

Day 14. Fly back home.

Transfer to Kathmandu airport for the flight back home. End of trip



ETHICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Mountain Company is committed to adopting a responsible attitude to the areas we visit. We are guests of the communities visited and with some thought and care we can ensure that everyone benefits from the experience.

We work closely with the International Porter Protection Group (www.ippg.net) who we support as a Camp 1 sponsor- we abide by their 5 guidelines for porter protection.

We also work with other organisations such as Climate Care (www.climatecare.org), Tourism Concern (www.tourismconcern.org.uk), Friends of Conservation (www.foc-uk.com) and Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (www.keepnepal.org).

We have developed a Responsible Tourism policy which aims to ensure that The Mountain Company and its clients act in a way that is socially, environmentally and culturally sound.

The Mountain Company has joined the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Know Before You Go campaign. The aim is to make sure travellers are properly prepared before travelling overseas. The best way to get the FCO latest advice is to visit their website at: www.fco.gov.uk/travel.





PRACTICAL INFORMATION

ACCOMMODATION IN KATHMANDU

For our Annapurna treks we use several hotels in Kathmandu depending on availability. They are as follows:

Hotel Tibet is located in Lazimpat next to the Radisson. For more information on Hotel Tibet please take a look at their website <http://www.hotel-tibet.com/> .

Hotel Manaslu is located in Lazimpat close to Hotel Tibet and the Radisson. For more information on Hotel Manaslu please take a look at their website <http://www.hotelmanaslu.com/>

Hotel Vajra is located on the road to Swayambunath Temple (commonly know as Monkey Temple). For more information on Hotel Vajra please take a look at their website <http://www.hotelvajra.com/>

Hotel Ambassador is located in Lazimpat near the diplomatic enclave. For more information on Hotel Ambassador please take a look at their website <http://www.acehotelsnepal.com/ambassador/>

There are store rooms at all of these hotels where you can leave luggage not required while on trek. There is also a security safe at these hotels for storage of valuables.

ACCOMMODATION IN POKHARA

For our Annapurna treks we use several hotels in Kathmandu depending on availability. They are as follows:

Hotel Barahi is located on lakeside and also has a swimming pool for more information please take a look at their website <http://www.barahi.com/>



Hotel Trek O'Tel is located on lakeside near bar and restaurants for more information please take a look at their website

<http://www.acehotelsnepal.com/trekotel/>

FOOD

In Kathmandu there is a wide range of excellent restaurants, some of the more popular ones are: K Too Steak House, Everest Steak House, Rumdoodles, Fire and Ice, La Dolce Vita, Mike's Breakfast and New Orleans. Breakfast is provided each morning by the hotel.

In the lodges for breakfast you will get porridge or cereal, toast or chapattis, omelettes and a range of hot drinks. On arrival in the afternoon you will be given tea and biscuits and a three course meal will follow later in the evening.

CLIMATE

The traditional trekking season in Nepal is late September to May, with October and November generally recognised as having the best weather. Spring is also a popular time of year with warmer weather and the advantage of seeing spring flowers and rhododendrons in bloom.

This trek will have a wide range of temperatures depending on the altitude and the time of day. In the mountains between 1,000m and 3,500m the nights will be cool, normally around 5°C, and during the day temperatures sometimes rise to 25°C. At higher altitudes temperatures range from about 15°C to -20°C.

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

A list of suggested clothing and equipment for the Annapurna Discovery trek has been included in Appendix below. This is a comprehensive list and experienced trekkers will often take only a selection of these items based on what has worked in the past. It is worth pointing out that you will need a sleeping bag for this trip although you can arrange to rent one in Kathmandu.



If you do not have the clothing and equipment contained in this list then a good option might be to rent from the UK. Trek Hire is a company that rents out high quality items at competitive prices which would save you the expense of buying. The link to their website is <http://www.trekhireuk.com/>

Alternatively if you are going to buy then please contact the office for the Cotswold Outdoor promo code that entitles you, as a client of The Mountain Company, to a 15% discount in their stores and online.

Each trekker should bring one backpack for items required during the day. Your day backpack will contain items such as warm clothes, jacket, camera, water bottles, personal first aid kit and snacks.

The rest of your personal equipment packed in a duffel bag or backpack will be carried by a porter. **The maximum weight allowance is 15kgs.** Please ensure that your bag is marked clearly on the outside for easy identification.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

All foreigners require a visa for entry into Nepal. It is your responsibility to obtain the entry visa. You can get from a Nepalese embassy overseas or on arrival in Nepal. Most people will obtain their visa on arrival to Kathmandu airport.

You will need one passport photo and the following fees dependent:

- 15 days USD\$25 or equivalent convertible currency
- 30 days USD\$40 or equivalent convertible currency
- 90 days USD\$100 or equivalent convertible currency

VACCINATIONS AND MEDICAL

You should obtain professional advice from a travel clinic or your local GP about which vaccinations to have before you arrive in Nepal. A dental check-up is a good idea as there will be no dental facilities while on the trek.

We bring a comprehensive first aid kit from UK (Life Systems Mountain Leader) plus high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines.



FLIGHTS

We recommend Max Travel (ATOL bonded license# 4705) for booking international flights and other travel arrangements. Please take a look at their website at <http://www.maxtravel.co.uk/> or give them a call on 020 7095 0920.

There are a number of good online agents that we also recommend, they are:

Kayak: *an excellent flight cost comparison website* <http://www.kayak.co.uk/>

Traveljungle: *another good flight cost comparison website* <http://www.traveljungle.co.uk/>

Cheap Tickets: this site quotes airfares in USD\$ & often is very competitive when translated back to GBP£ <http://www.cheaptickets.com/>

Southall Travel: very competitive prices for India, Pakistan and Nepal both online and telephone support <http://www.southalltravel.co.uk/>

For more information, please take a look at our webpage "Booking international flights" at <http://www.themountaincompany.co.uk/content/view/904/>

INSURANCE

Travel insurance for any Mountain Company itinerary is a condition of booking a holiday. At the very least you should have emergency medical and repatriation insurance which must include the cost of mountain rescue. Cancellation insurance is strongly recommended as all deposits paid to The Mountain Company are non-refundable.

To get an online quote for your personal travel and trekking insurance (UK residents only), take a look at Snowcard's website at http://www.snowcard.co.uk/pages/d_select1.asp?referrer_id=MC



Please note that The Mountain Company do not act as an agent of Snowcard Insurance and any policy bought via this web link is effected directly with Snowcard Insurance Services Limited.

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

For those of you who are visiting Nepal for the first time we have provided some cultural information to help you fit in and feel at ease:

- The dress code is important for both men and women. Men and women should wear trousers rather than shorts while trekking.
- There are many hot springs, rivers and lakes where it is pleasant to take a dip, it is fine for men to go bare-chested while bathing but they should not go nude. Women should try and be as modest as possible in these situations.
- Hindus are concerned about the ritual pollution of food when it is touched by someone outside their caste or religion. Therefore, do not touch any cooked foods on display and when drinking from a container used by others avoid touching your lips to it. Do not eat food with your left hand and make sure you only give or receive food with your right hand.
- Shoes are considered degrading so keep them on the ground and remove them before putting your feet on anything. If you enter a Nepali house follow the example of your host in deciding whether to remove your shoes but on entering a temple or monastery you should definitely remove them.
- You will pass Buddhist mani walls, chortens, and stupas along the trek and to follow local traditions you should pass them on your right.



- When visiting a monastery or gumpa it is customary to give a donation for its upkeep.

SUGGESTED READING

Please take a look at The Mountain Company's online bookstore for a wide selection of books and maps to Nepal, the link is at:

<http://astore.amazon.co.uk/themountainco-21>

Annapurna south face by Chris Bonnington

Himalayan Pilgrimage by David Snellgrove

Annapurna by Maurice Herzog

True Summit: What Really Happened on the Legendary Ascent on Annapurna by David Roberts

The Ascent of Rum Doodle by WE Bowman

A Nepalese Journey: The Essence of the Annapurna Circuit (Mountain Photography) by Andrew Stevenson

Nepali Phrasebook by Lonely Planet

MAPS

Nepal Trekking Map Himalayan Maphouse Scale: 1:900,000 **This map will be included in your welcome pack when you arrive in Nepal.**

National Geographic Annapurna Trekking 1:135,000



APPENDIX 1

SUGGESTED CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT LIST

Footwear:

- Walking boots. A pair of water repellent boots with ankle support.
- Gaiters. A pair used to keep boots dry if walking through deep snow or on wet ground.
- Wool and liner socks.
- Trainers or trail shoes. Can be used in camp/lodge in the evenings.

Clothing:

- Waterproof jacket and trousers (goretex or similar).
- Trekking trousers.
- Long sleeve shirts (not cotton).
- Micro fleece.
- Mid to heavyweight fleece.
- Sleeveless or body warmer type fleece.
- Thermals or base layer for top & bottom (merino wool or synthetic).
- Fleece pants.

Handwear:

- Fleece gloves.

Headwear:

- Wool or fleece hat.
- Sun hat.



- Bandana or scarf.
- Headtorch. Bring extra batteries.
- Sunglasses.

Personal Equipment:

- Backpack large enough to carry water bottles, camera, lunch and extra clothing.
- Stuff sacks for keeping your gear dry and organised.
- Two water bottles (Nalgene wide mouth bottles are the best).
- Sunscreen and lipsalve with a high SPF.
- Insect repellent.
- Water purification tablets (Pristine, Biox Acqua or Acqa Mira).
- Favourite snack food.
- Books, ipod and cards etc.
- Trekking poles (Black Diamond with “Flick Lock” are best).
- Camera with spare batteries and memory cards.
- Insurance certificate.
- Earplugs (optional).
- Baby wipes (optional).
- Hand sanitizer (optional).

Travelling:

- Duffle bag or large backpack for your personal gear on the trek (carried by a porter). Bring a small combination padlock to secure the bag.
- Travel clothes. You will need casual clothing for air travel days and time spent in Kathmandu.
- Toiletry bag include toilet paper, soap, towel, toothbrush, etc.



Personal first aid kit:

Note: we provide a comprehensive group first aid kit but please bring personal medications and other items you might use regularly such as:

- Any personal medications.
- Malaria prophylactic tablets.
- Blister treatment (Compeed patches are the best).
- Rehydration powder eg Dioralyte.
- Analgesics (paracetamol, ibuprofen and aspirin).
- Plasters and zinc oxide tape.
- Throat lozenges.
- Diamox (helps with acclimatisation).



APPENDIX 2

INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER PROTECTION

In accordance with "The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992" all passengers booking with The Mountain Trekking Company Ltd ("The Mountain Company") are fully protected for the initial deposit and subsequently the balance of all monies paid to us, including repatriation if required, arising from cancellation or curtailment of your travel arrangements due to the insolvency of The Mountain Company.

There is no requirement for Financial Protection of day trips, and none is provided. This insurance is only valid for packages booked that DO NOT include flights.

Consumer aware: Your booking is insured by IPP Ltd and its panel of insurers. This insurance is only valid for passengers who book and pay directly with/to The Mountain Company. If you have booked and/ or paid direct to a Travel Agent for a holiday with The Mountain Company please request proof of how the booking is secured as this will not be covered by IPP Ltd in this instance. For further information please go to www.ipplondon.co.uk

This Insurance has been arranged by International Passenger Protection Limited and underwritten by Insurers who are members of the Association of British Insurers & Lloyds Syndicates.

Claim procedures: download claim form from www.ipplondon.co.uk, any occurrence which may give rise to a claim should be advised within 14 days to: International Passenger Protection Limited, Claims Office, IPP House, 22-26 Station Road, West Wickham, Kent BR4 0PR, United Kingdom. Telephone: +44 (0) 208 7763752. Fax: +44 (0) 208 7763751.

In order to deal promptly with any claims hereunder it is essential that you retain all bills, receipts and other documents relating to your travel arrangements. Claims forms must be submitted to IPP within six months of date of insolvency they cannot consider or pay claims received after this date.