

ANNAPURNA LUXURY LODGES



walking in the Annapurna middle hills with Mount Machapuchare behind



HIGHLIGHTS

- During the trek you will stay in Kerr and Downey luxury lodges. They are at a standard far better than anything else available in the area.
- The Kerr and Downey lodges are ecologically sympathetic and carefully located for their scenic views. All rooms have en suite bathrooms with running hot water.
- These lodges are conveniently placed within a reasonable days walk from each other making this itinerary a good objective for a wide range of people.
- We have designed a fascinating trek based around these lodges where, not only do you get the superb mountain views of the high Himalayan peaks but also visit Gurung villages and terraced farmland along the trail.
- There is an option to extend your holiday after the trek by going rafting or visiting Chitwan National Park home of the Bengal tiger.

“We thoroughly enjoyed our honeymoon, for us it was perfect and was over far too quickly! We would certainly recommend it to others and if you are prepared for what to expect, as we were, it makes it all the more enjoyable.” Jacky and Julien Cobb (UK)



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Total number of days	12 days
Grade & days trekking	Gentle, 6 trekking days
Accommodation	6 nights hotel, 5 nights Ker & Downey lodges
2010 price ex Kathmandu	£1,250 (US\$2,095)
Minimum group size	2
Dates	March 7 th to 18 th 2010 October 10 th to 21 st 2010 November 7 th to 18 th 2010 December 5 th to 16 th 2010 January 30 th to February 10 th 2011 March 6 th to 17 th 2011 October 11 th to 20 th 2010 November 6 th to 17 th 2011 December 4 th to 15 th 2011



THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- Internal flight to/from Pokhara and Kathmandu.
- All transfers including airport collections.
- Twin share room at Hotel Shangri La in Kathmandu & Shangri La Resort in Pokhara.
- Breakfast only at hotels, all meals included while on trek.
- Twin share room at Ker & Downey lodges while on trek.
- All trekking arrangements including permits and fees, TMC guide and porters.
- Complimentary Annapurna trekking map.
- Financial protection insurance with International Passenger Protection.

THE FOLLOWING SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IS AVAILABLE:

Single room supplement £POA

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 £515).
- Travel & trekking insurance.
- 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 Nepal pre departure information).
- 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 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.

This Insurance has been arranged by International Passenger Protection Limited and underwritten by Insurers who are members of the Association of British Insurers. A certificate detailing this cover will be given to each passenger as evidence of cover.



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

An ideal introduction to trekking in Nepal while staying at high quality Ker and Downey lodges in the Annapurna region.

Our Annapurna Luxury Lodge trek is the ultimate way of exploring Nepal in style while staying in the comfortable lodges of the Annapurna region; they are at a standard far better than anything else available in the area. The Ker and Downey lodges provide the highest level of service whilst on trek with landscaped gardens, comfortable lounges and bedrooms including hot showers and western toilets.

The trail between lodges takes you through beautiful Nepalese villages with spectacular views of the Annapurna region. This trek is a relatively gentle walk designed for the first time trekker in the low-lying hills fringing Pokhara. It is a culturally rich journey through Gurung villages with an ever increasing build-up of mountain views. We trek for six days through the Annapurna foothills with about five hours walking each day.

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 Shangri La.**

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Day 2. Sightseeing in Kathmandu.

Today we explore Kathmandu with a 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 (820m).

You will be transferred from the hotel to Kathmandu domestic airport for the flight to Pokhara where, on a clear day, you will get superb views of the Annapurnas. After landing at Pokhara you will be transferred to Shangri la. You have the rest of the afternoon free to explore Pokhara or to relax by the swimming pool. **Overnight at the Shangri la Village Resort.**

Day 4. Trek to Sanctuary Lodge, Birethanti (1,100m)- 3 hours walking.

We drive for about an hour along the Seti River valley from Pokhara to the trek start point. The path follows a ridge in the lower foothills of the Annapurnas where there are good views of the mountains and Pokhara valley. The route then descends towards the Modi valley through bamboo and terrace farmland.

The Sanctuary Lodge is located a few miles from Birethanti village overlooking the Modi river. The lodge is a typical Kerr and Downey set up with comfortable sitting room, dining room and attractive gardens. After lunch at Sanctuary lodge you have the afternoon to explore the area or to relax in the gardens.

Day 5. Trek to Himalaya Lodge, Ghandrung (2,012m)- 5 to 6 hours walking.



After breakfast we start with a climb to Ghandrung village. The trail passes through more terraced farmland and into rhododendron and oak forests. After 3 hours you pass through the village of Kimche (1,554m) where we stop for lunch.

After lunch there is a further climb to Ghandrung at just over 2,000m. The Himalaya lodge is a 19th century Gurung village house with a pleasant reception area, dining room and open fireplace.

Day 6. Day walk from Himalaya Lodge, Ghandrung.

Today we explore Ghandrung and the surrounding area. There are good views from here of Annapurna South and Machapuchare.

Day 7. Trek to Gurung Lodge in Majgaun (1,400m)- 5 to 6 hours walking.

Today the trail follows the route down from the Annapurna Sanctuary and after several hours you will arrive at Shauli Bazaar. From here, we follow the the Modi River until the cable bridge that we crossed on the first day. It is a two hours walk uphill to the village of Majgaun and the Gurung Lodge.

Day 8. Trek to Basanta Lodge in Dhampus (1,554m)- 5 hours walking.

After breakfast we start the walk through forests of oak, rhododendron and silver birch with incredible views of Annapurna South, Hiunchuli and Lamjung.

The path soon levels out and reaches Pothana village, from here it is downhill to Dhampus and the Basanta lodge. This lodge, like the Himalaya Lodge, is based on an old Gurung village house and from its garden there are superb views of the Fishtail peak and the Annapurna range.

Day 9. Trek to Phedi and drive to Pokhara- 1 ½ hours walking.

After breakfast on the lawn, we leave Dhampus and descend to the Pokhara valley passing more villages and terraced fields. There is a short drive from Phedi back to the Shangri la hotel. In the afternoon you can either relax by the pool or venture into Pokhara.

Day 10. Fly to Kathmandu.

Transfer to the airport for the flight to Kathmandu. You will be met at the airport and driven back to the hotel. **Overnight at Shangri La.**



Day 11. At leisure in Kathmandu.

Today is a free day for sightseeing or shopping in Thamel. Or you could just relax at the hotel by the swimming pool. **Overnight at Shangri La.**

Day 12. 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

In Kathmandu we use Hotel Shangri La (four star). The hotel is located close to the British Embassy near to the centre of Kathmandu. It is within walking distance of the Royal Palace and the tourist hub of Thamel.

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 are likely to 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 Luxury Lodges 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.

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/>

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

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 baselayer 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.
- 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).