

# HALF ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT, NEPAL



Top of Thorong La pass on the Annapurna Circuit



Telephone: 01647 433880 / International callers: +44 1647 433880

Skype ID: Rolandh1 / Email: [info@themountaincompany.co.uk](mailto:info@themountaincompany.co.uk) / [www.themountaincompany.co.uk](http://www.themountaincompany.co.uk)

Postal address: Westcott Farm, Chagford, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ13 8JF 9QG, United Kingdom



## HIGHLIGHTS

- ) Half Annapurna Circuit is the shorter version of the classic trek around the Annapurna massif including the main highlights such as crossing Thorong La.
- ) This itinerary is a good introduction to trekking in Nepal with a Sherpa guide while staying at teahouse lodges of the Annapurna region.
- ) The trail takes you from villages in the middle hills to the remote Manang area and across the Thorong La pass then down the Kali Gandaki gorge.
- ) We follow Natural Annapurna Trekking Trails (NATT) where possible and have been involved in promoting these new trails through organising a recce trek for outdoor journalist, Terry Adby, for [more information on BMC website](#)
- ) There are two days to explore Kathmandu including a day's sightseeing tour to Patan Durbar Square, Pashupatinath and Boudhanath.

## REASONS TO CHOOSE THE MOUNTAIN COMPANY FOR HALF ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT

- ) We have been operating treks in Nepal and to Annapurna for many years and our guides have developed knowledge and experience in knowing the best lodges and less travelled trails of the region.
- ) The acclimatisation schedule for our 12 day Annapurna Circuit trek has worked well for our groups in the past with an excellent success rate of our trekkers crossing Thorong La pass. Our itineraries have been carefully planned to ensure you remain fit and healthy and as a reserve against bad weather.
- ) The Mountain Company use the best lodges in each location.
- ) We send a Thuraya satellite phone on all of our treks in Nepal. It is essential for your guide to have reliable communications with us for logistics, planning and group safety.



- ) The Mountain Company will receive bespoke weather forecasts for the Everest region from EverestWeather.com throughout the duration of this trek.
- ) Roland Hunter, owner and founder of The Mountain Company, has modified the itinerary based on his first-hand experience of Annapurna Circuit.

## TESTIMONIALS

“The Annapurna Circuit has many spectacular views. Roland provided, not only the knowledge, but also a comfortable atmosphere which lent itself to many extraordinary memories. This trip was both refreshing and rewarding. We look forward to coming back to Nepal for another adventure.” **Neil and Tamara Fricke (Canada)**

“I speak for everyone in the group when I say that we have had a fantastic time here. Our guide, Chandra, was an absolute star, such a lovely man and managed us so well, Nabin and the three porters also did a wonderful job they all made a great team. Thanks for your time and efforts in making our time here completely trouble free and please pass our thanks on to Chandra.” **Ian Gribble (UK)**

“I have to say we are so extremely pleased that we made the choice to go with The Mountain Company, the whole trip has been just amazing, thank you to all the guys involved including the sherpas and the guides for the city tours and your man on the ground in Katmandu. Our warmest thanks goes to Chandra whose professionalism got us over the pass but who was loads of fun too. He looked after us so well, and had a great team of lads. We all made it over the pass which was mainly due to Chandras training and advice, that was a great day and we all also thought the day walking to Lupra was magical, so glad we took that option. Would love to return soon. Thank you so much, Roland.” **Sue Charter (UK)**



# HALF ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT

Total number of days	17 days
Grade & days trekking	Strenuous, 12 trekking days
Accommodation	3 nights hotel, 13 nights teahouse lodges
2019 price from Kathmandu	£1,625 (or US\$2,115 or €1,850)
2020 price from Kathmandu	£1,625 (or US\$2,115 or €1,850)
Minimum group size	2
Maximum group size	10
Dates	April 5 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup> 2019 ( <b>Easter: April 21<sup>st</sup></b> ) May 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> 2019 October 4 <sup>th</sup> to 20 <sup>th</sup> 2019 October 18 <sup>th</sup> to November 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2019 November 1 <sup>st</sup> to 17 <sup>th</sup> 2019 November 22 <sup>nd</sup> to December 8 <sup>th</sup> 2019 April 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> 2020 May 1 <sup>st</sup> to 17 <sup>th</sup> 2020 October 2 <sup>nd</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup> 2020 October 16 <sup>th</sup> to November 1 <sup>st</sup> 2020



October 30<sup>th</sup> to November 15<sup>th</sup> 2020

November 20<sup>th</sup> to December 6<sup>th</sup> 2020

## THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- ) All internal transport and transfers including airport collections.
- ) Internal flight at the end of the trek from Jomsom to Pokhara & Kathmandu.
- ) One day sightseeing in Kathmandu with Nepalese cultural guide and private vehicle.
- ) Twin share room in Kathmandu at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador.
- ) Twin share room with common bathroom while on trek.
- ) Breakfast only in Kathmandu, all meals included while on trek. Trek meals include breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea and biscuits plus two course dinner (soup and main meal) plus up to two cups of hot drinks per meal.
- ) All trekking arrangements including permits and fees, trekking guide(s) and porter(s). **We provide one trekking guide for group size of two people and two guides for a group size of three people and three guides for group size of six people plus.**
- ) Bespoke weather forecasts for Annapurna region from EverestWeather.com throughout the duration of this trek.
- ) Thuraya satellite phone to ensure our guides have reliable communications with us for logistics, planning and group safety.
- ) Annapurna trekking map given to you on arrival to Kathmandu.
- ) Rubberised luggage tags posted to you before departure.
- ) Full financial protection for all monies paid to us through our membership of Association of Bonded Travel Operators Trust (our ABTOT membership number

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is 5365) and having an Air Travel Organiser's Licence (our ATOL number is 10921).

- ) 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 Pre Trip Information" notes.

## **THE FOLLOWING SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IS AVAILABLE:**

Single room supplement in Kathmandu £160 (US\$200 or €175)

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.
- ) Travel & trekking insurance.
- ) Nepal visa for 30 days.
- ) Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu.
- ) Personal clothing & equipment, please see Appendix for suggested kit list.
- ) Tips (guidance on amounts included in our "Nepal Pre Trip Information" notes).
- ) Other items not listed in "What is included".

## **PARTICIPANT SELECTION**

The Mountain Company carefully selects and screens potential participants applying to join our groups to ensure the trip is an appropriate objective for you. We



have a number of pre-trip questions asking information about your outdoor experience, training, experience, medical conditions and fitness. To access the pre-trip questions please send in your application by clicking on the “**Apply now**” **button** on the trek webpage. After review of your replies we might contact you by telephone or email for further information to aid our selection process.

Please ensure you have done your own research about Annapurna Circuit trek by reading our pre trip documents (Trip Dossier, Trip Grading and Trip Reports published on TMC blog) to ensure you have a realistic idea of what to expect. Every trip organised by The Mountain Company has been graded based on four factors: daily walking times, altitude, terrain and remoteness.

## INTRODUCTION

Half Annapurna Circuit is the shorter version of the classic trek around the Annapurna massif including the main highlights such as crossing Thorong La.

This is one of the classic treks of the world offering a cross section of Nepal from lowland terraced rice fields, pine forest to the arid terrain in the Himalayan rain shadow near Muktinath. The trail starts at Besisahar and follows the Marsyangdi river through Gurung settlements to the Tibetan region of Manang. We are now in Buddhist country where you will see colourful prayer flags, mani walls and monasteries along the way.

The high point is the challenging day crossing the Thorung La pass at 5,416m followed by the trek down the deep Kali Gandaki gorge located between the Annapurna and Annapurna massifs. The mountain views throughout this trek encompass the highest and most beautiful in the world including Lamjung, Himalchuli, Manaslu, Annapurna, Annapurna and Machapuchare.

## 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.**

Flying into Kathmandu along the northern border of Nepal on a clear day is in itself an unforgettable experience, with the entire Nepalese Himalaya sprawling out below you. After customs, you will pass out of the restricted area and into the passenger pick-up area outside the building. You will see a Mountain Company signboard and our representative will be waiting to welcome you to Nepal.

After transferring to your hotel, you will be given a chance to catch your breath and then be given a full briefing. The rest of the day will be yours to explore and to shop for any items that you require. Today you will hear the Nepalese word for hello 'Namaste', you will probably never forget that word after this trek. **Overnight at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador (Meals: B).**

### **Day 2. Drive to Jagat (930m)- 10 hours driving.**

We leave Kathmandu early in the morning by private bus. It is a scenic drive with several picturesque gorges and occasional glimpses of mountain peaks. At Dumre we turn off the Pokhara highway and drive north following Marsyangdi River to Besisahar. We drive beyond this town passing a new hydro-plant being built at Bhulbule by the Chinese until we arrive at Ngadi. At this village we will change vehicles from our bus to local jeeps then continue the drive to Jagat where we camp in the garden of a lodge.

During the months of April, May and October it will very hot and humid with temperatures often more than 30 Degrees Celsius for the first few days of the trek. We have chosen the months of May and October as these months are likely to have optimal conditions for crossing the Teri La high pass. It is important to bring plenty of water, wear a sun hat and apply sun cream. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

### **Day 3. Trek to Dharapani (1,940m)- 7 hours walking.**

Shortly after leaving Jagat, there are views of the impressive 200m Chamje waterfall before dropping to the river and crossing to return to the quieter east side of the valley. A new dirt track, which now runs all the way into the Annapurna Circuit, is on the west side of the valley; we avoid this, enjoying the wildlife, flora, terraces and small farms and an occasionally excellent path of large stone steps climbing and descending the spurs of the valley.

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The trail passes through huge boulders fallen from the mountains above. There is a steep but spectacular ascent on a good trail to the beautiful and colourful village of Tal, which lies in a wide flat valley. After about four hours walking we have lunch at Tal. After lunch there is a dramatic section of the trail along the base of a cliff next to the Marsyangdi River. Landslides on the east bank make the trail here impassable and we have to cross the river to the west bank where we join the dirt jeep track for a short section into Dharapani. There is a good selection of shops and a telephone point in the town. After about three hours walk in the afternoon we arrived to Dharapani at 1,940 m. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 4. Trek to Chame (2,700m)- 6 to 7 hours walking.**

We climb to the village of Bagarchap, walk through a forest and then follow the river to Chame. Today, there are great views of Annapurna II (7,937m) and Lamjung Himal (6,932m) up the valley and if you look back you will be able to see the Manaslu (8,154m) and Peak 29 (7,833m). **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 5. Trek to Pisang (3,190m)- 5 hours walking.**

Leaving Chame you pass some mani walls and a little further there is a water-turned prayer wheel. After the suspension bridge the valley widens and Pisang Peak (6,091m) will become visible. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 6. Trek to Manang (3,500m)- 6 to 7 hours walking.**

We recommend taking the high level route to Manang (6 to 7 hours) today but there is also the option to take the low route (5 hours) along the valley floor. The high level route starts by crossing the river outside Pisang and follows a path which passes a lake and a long mani wall. There is a long climb along a switch back path to the village of Ghyaru. We will stop at one of the tea houses and enjoy the stunning view of Annapurna II and IV.

From Ghyaru we follow a high level trail to Ngawal the next village. Finally you descend back to the valley floor and rejoin the main trail to continue to Braga and Manang. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Days 7 and 8. Day walks for acclimatisation day around Manang (3,500m).**

It is important to have an extra few days in Manang in order to help acclimatisation for the next few days as we start the climb towards the Thorong La. There are lots



of options for day walks around Manang. One possibility is to walk to Khangsar village on the way to Tilicho Lake or a longer walk to Ice Lake above Braga. It is well worth visiting the gumpa above Braga as well as attending the Himalayan Rescure afternoon lecture on altitude and acclimatisation. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 9. Trek to Yak Kharka (4,090m)- 4 hours walking.**

It is a shorter day today, about 3 to 4 hours, in order to help everyone acclimatise to the altitude. It is a good idea to go for an afternoon walk which also helps with this process, you can either walk up the valley and back to the lodge or climb the ridge behind the village. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 10. Trek to Thorong Phedi (4,490m)- 4 hours walking.**

It is another short day of about 3 to 4 hours walking again to help the acclimatisation process. Leaving Yak Kharka we pass through a few lodges at Letdar and after crossing the river there is a climb to Thorong Phedi. In the afternoon it is a good idea to go for a short walk. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 11. Trek over the Thorong La (5,400m) and to Muktinath (3,800m)- 7 to 10 hours walking.**

Today we will leave Phedi at first light for the challenging walk over the Thorong La. The trail is on undulating terrain and after about 4 to 5 hours we should reach the pass.

There are spectacular views of the Annapurna Range to the south and the Mukat Himal bordering Dolpo to the west, as we descend on the other side Annapurna (8,175m) and Tukucho Peak (6,920m). The descent to Muktinath is quite steep and will take between 3 to 4 hours. It is a good idea to have walking poles to help in case of a slippery path if there is still snow (depends on the time of year) and to take the strain off the knees. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

**Day 12. Spare day.**

We have included a spare day in case of bad weather or for any other eventuality. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**



### **Day 13. Trek to Kagbeni (2,800m).**

Today we have a short walk to Kagbeni, this will probably be welcome after the long day going over the pass yesterday. After breakfast it is well worth going to visit the temples above the village of Muktinath.

The trail passes through a beautiful arid landscape in the rain shadow of the Himalayas, this is starkly different to green and lush terrain at the start of our trek a week ago.

We descend steeply to the green oasis of Kagbeni. It is a fascinating place to explore with narrow streets and old buildings. One needs a special permit to follow the path north of Kagbeni along the Thak Khola to Upper Mustang. **Overnight at teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

### **Day 14. Trek to Jomsom (2,670m)- 4 to 5 hours walking.**

The trail follows the Kali Gandaki down to the town of Jomsom. In Jomsom we stay at one of the lodges located near the airport. **Overnight teahouse lodge (Meals: B,L,D).**

### **Day 15. Fly to Pokhara & Kathmandu.**

We take an early morning flight to Pokhara then connect onto another flight to Kathmandu. **Overnight at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador (Meals: B).**

**Important note:** there is a significant safety risk to consider when flying on airlines in Nepal, if you would like to avoid STOL flight from Jomsom to Pokhara there is an option to extend your trek by walking to Beni in three days and then driving to Pokhara. It is also possible to drive from Jomsom to Pokhara in one long day if there are no landslides or other delays on the road. However there are also safety considerations with this option as driving in Nepal is risky too. For further information about the flight safety risk in Nepal please read our "Threat and Risk Assessment" plus "Jomsom STOL flight" sections of this Trip Dossier.

### **Day 16. Sightseeing in Kathmandu.**

This is a one day guided sightseeing tour of the Kathmandu Valley visiting three out of the seven World Heritage Sites. You will start off by visiting Patan Durbar Square then drive to the Buddhist stupa at Boudhanath followed by the last stop of the day at the Hindu shrine of Pashupatinath. The tour is likely to finish around 4pm and the rest of the day is free to further explore Kathmandu.



Three major towns are located in the valley, Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur, each having a great artistic and architectural tradition. Kathmandu is the capital and the largest city in the country. Patan, the second largest is separated from Kathmandu by a river. Bhaktapur, the third largest, is towards the eastern end of the valley and its relative isolation is reflected in its slower pace and more distinctly mediaeval atmosphere.

In the Valley the landscape is dramatically sculpted by the contours of the paddy fields. The towns and villages are alive with the colours of farm produce, ranging from pyramids of golden grain to the vivid reds of chilli peppers laid out on mats to dry in the sun. In the streets and towns there is a constant bustle of activity, especially in the bazaars and markets where the farmers sell their vegetables and fruit. **Overnight at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Ambassador (Meals: B).**

#### **Day 17. Fly back home.**

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

## **YOUR COMPLETE FINANCIAL PROTECTION**

The Mountain Trekking Company Ltd (trading as The Mountain Company) is a fully licensed and bonded tour operator. For flight inclusive packages sold to UK residents these will be covered by our Air Travel Organisers Licence (our ATOL number is 10921). For packages that do not include flights and for packages sold to customers outside of the UK your financial protection is covered by our membership of Association of Bonded Travel Organisers' Trust ("ABTOT"). Our ABTOT membership number is 5365.





Our membership of these organisations means that you can book with us in complete confidence that all monies paid to us for trips are protected.

## THREAT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

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. The ability to work in team is an important aspect of all of our trips.

As a part of our planning process we have performed a detailed threat and risk assessment for our Half Annapurna Circuit trek. It is worth pointing out all of our trips have a certain degree of risk, this is of course part of the attraction of adventure travel and why so many people choose to join this type of holiday. However by identifying the potential hazards on Half Annapurna Circuit we can assess the level of risk and implement control measures to reduce this happening.

Our full threat and risk assessment for Half Annapurna Circuit is available to clients on request. For your information we have listed below a summary of the significant risks and hazards identified by us:

- ) Falls and trips resulting in physical injury eg. slipping on ice or falling off the path.
- ) Altitude illness including but not limited to AMS, HACE and HAPE.
- ) Getting lost or becoming separated from group eg. crossing Thorong La pass in whiteout.
- ) Climatic injuries (dehydration, sun burn, heat exhaustion, hypothermia or heat stroke). Please note during the months of April, May and October it will very hot and humid with temperatures often more than 30 Degrees Celsius for the first three days of the trek.



- ) Rock fall and landslides.
- ) Snow and ice avalanches eg crossing Thorong La pass.
- ) Lightning strike.
- ) Wildlife, pack animals (eg. donkeys or horses) or stray dogs. Pack animals have been known to knock people off the path. Dogs can attack and bite, we advise you discuss rabies vaccination with your doctor.
- ) Earthquake.
- ) Risk of fire in the hotel or lodge.
- ) Endemic local diseases. We advise you discuss vaccinations with your doctor before departure.
- ) Physiological injury such as heart attack, appendicitis, hernia, toothache etc. in a remote area.
- ) Road traffic accident. We use a private bus or jeep from Kathmandu to Ngadi however due to local rules we cannot take drive our bus to Srichaur so we have to use local jeeps for this section of road.
- ) Flight accident [*see paragraph "Internal flights in Nepal" for further information*].
- ) Contaminated food and/ or water.

This trip visits a remote area where you are away from normal emergency services and medical facilities. In case of a serious injury requiring hospitalisation 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.





# THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT TOUR OPERATORS (“AITO”)

The Mountain Company is a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) and we have agreed to abide by the terms of the AITO Quality Charter.

AITO is the Association for independent and specialist holiday companies. Our member companies, usually owner-managed, strive to create overseas holidays with high levels of professionalism and a shared concern for quality and personal service. The Association encourages the highest standards in all aspects of tour operating. For more information please take a look at <http://www.aito.com/>



## 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 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.

In 2017 the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) launched Project PROTECT in recognition of the important role that destinations play in the future of



the travel industry. The aim of this project is to encourage sustainable tourism and to nurture the destinations for tomorrow's travellers. The PROTECT acronym stands for People / Resources / Outreach / Tourism / Environment / Conservation / Tomorrow.

This project is led by Professor Xavier Font of the University of Surrey and each AITO member has to publish an annual pledge and report back at the end of the year on how they got along. To see The Mountain Company's Project PROTECT pledges for 2018 and 2017, please take a look at our [Sustainable Tourism page on AITO website](#).



We work closely with the International Porter Protection Group and abide by their five guidelines for porter protection, their website is at [www.ippg.net](http://www.ippg.net). We also have partnered with Kathmandu Environmental Education Project in Nepal, their website is at [www.keepnepal.org](http://www.keepnepal.org)

## 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. Hotel Tibet is our usual hotel for our standard trips in Nepal as our clients enjoy staying at this property due to its good location, comfortable rooms and high level of service. There is a garden terrace next to the restaurant on the ground floor and the roof terrace with the Yeti

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Bar overlooking the city. For more information on Hotel Tibet please take a look at their website <http://www.hotel-tibet.com.np/>

**Hotel Ambassador** is located in Lazimpat not far from Hotel Tibet and Manaslu. This hotel was rebuilt and opened in Spring 2017 with well-appointed rooms including both King size and twin beds, complimentary wifi, tea & coffee, iron & board, combined bath & shower. The rooms are a good size at 30m<sup>2</sup> and are well decorated with original art. The rooms have air conditioning and are sound proofed for quiet nights rest. For more information on Hotel Ambassador please take a look at their website: <http://www.ambassadornepal.com/>

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.

## FOOD

In Kathmandu and Pokhara there is a wide range of excellent restaurants, please read our Nepal Pre Trip information document for our recommendations. Breakfast is provided each morning by the hotel.

While on the trek, the lodges provide good quality food in sufficient quantities. Trek meals include breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea and biscuits plus two course dinner (soup and main meal) plus up to two cups of hot drinks per meal.

## 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 -15°C.



## CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

A list of clothing and equipment for Annapurna Circuit trek has been included in Appendix below. 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 and Expedition Kit Hire rent out high quality items at competitive prices which would save you the expense of buying. The links to their websites are at <http://www.trekhireuk.com/> and <http://www.expeditionkithire.co.uk>

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. Typically the backpack would be 30 to 40 litres in size.

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. Please read our Nepal Pre Trip information document for more details about getting your Nepal visa.



## 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 including high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines. Please get in contact with us if you would like to see the list of medicines contained in our medical kits.

## INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

The Mountain Company does not book international flights for our holidays. Instead all package prices are Land Only with services starting from arrival to the destination country.

If you would like help arranging flights then we suggest you contact our partner travel agent, StudentUniverse (ATOL registered) a specialist division of the Flight Centre Travel Group ---> [Get an online quote](#)

## INTERNAL FLIGHTS IN NEPAL

British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (“FCO”) travel advice to Nepal states that “STOL airstrips in Nepal are among the most remote and difficult to land on in the world and are a challenge for even the most technically proficient pilots and well-maintained aircraft.” For their latest advice please take a look at their Safety & Security section under Air Travel, link at: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/nepal/safety-and-security>

There have been a number of recent air accidents in Nepal and in December 2013 The European Union banned all airlines based in Nepal from flying in the 28-nation bloc under the latest changes to a list of unsafe carriers. For more information on Nepal’s air safety profile take a look at Aviation Safety Network, link at: <http://aviation-safety.net/database/country/country.php?id=9N>



## 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.

Please carefully check your insurers' Terms and Conditions in particular you should make sure the following is covered: 1) Activity (i.e touring, trekking or mountaineering) 2) Maximum altitude reached on trek 3) Helicopter evacuation in an emergency.

It is important for you to understand that ultimately the burden of any expense incurred in evacuation and repatriation procedures will be borne by you and that it is your responsibility to pay any costs incurred in respect of any evacuation or for medical treatment. You should be fully aware of the implications involved in arranging your own travel insurance and understand the limitations and exclusions of your policy.

You should be aware that under certain circumstances, The Mountain Company leader (or our local agent, if no western leader) might instigate rescue proceedings via helicopter (or any other means necessary) in situations of medical emergency without first contacting your insurance company for their approval.

The Mountain Company has arranged travel and trekking insurance for European Union residents with the specialist insurance broker **Campbell Irvine**. Their insurance policy will cover you for most of the trips in our portfolio. However if your trek is classified or graded by The Mountain Company as "**Strenuous**" or "**Challenging**" then you must make sure you select this option when obtaining an online quote for your insurance. Campbell Irvine will not provide insurance cover for any trips classified as "**Mountaineering**".

**CAMPBELL IRVINE**  
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE





To apply for an online quote through [Campbell Irvine's Direct Travel Insurance](#) website. Should you have any questions regarding the terms and conditions of cover please contact Campbell Irvine on 0207 938 1734 or email [info@campbellirvine.com](mailto:info@campbellirvine.com)

We have [listed on TMC website a comprehensive list of specialist adventure travel insurers](#) that our trekkers from UK, EU and Internationally based have used in the past. Please carefully check their Terms & Conditions prior to purchase. These companies are not necessarily recommended by us so it is your responsibility to ensure you have appropriate coverage.

## 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

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

## CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT LIST FOR HALF ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT

For the safety of everyone in the group and to help ensure a successful trek, you are required to have the following items in our clothing and equipment list tailored for Half Annapurna Circuit trek.

As a reminder, the weather on this trek will vary season to season and day to day as you ascend to higher elevations. During the first couple of days on Annapurna Circuit trek you are likely to experience hot conditions with temperatures around 25°C. You will experience the coldest temperatures at Thorung Phedi at an altitude of 4,490m where overnight lows will be down to around -15°C.

### Footwear:

- ) Walking boots. A pair of water repellent boots with ankle support.
- ) Walking socks.
- ) Trainers or trail shoes. Can be used in lodge in the evenings.

### Trekking gear for crossing the passes:

- ) Trekking poles (Black Diamond with “Flick Lock” are best). Having two poles is mandatory as required for your safety on steep and loose sections of the trail and for walking through deep snow higher up.
- ) Kahtoola Microspikes or YakTrax XTRs. These are for your safety and security when descending passes if snowy or icy conditions, for more information please take a look at: <https://kahtoola.com/product/microspikes/> and <https://www.yaktrax.com/product/xtr>
- ) Gaiters. A pair of knee high gaiters used to keep boots dry if walking through deep snow or on wet ground.

**Clothing:**

- ) Waterproof jacket and trousers (goretex or similar). For use if it rains or snows during the trek.
- ) Trekking trousers. Minimum two pairs of trousers.
- ) Long sleeve shirts (not cotton). Minimum two shirts.
- ) Micro fleece.
- ) Mid to heavyweight fleece.
- ) Sleeveless/ gilet or body warmer type fleece. This will help keep your core warm while not bulking when layering up. Gilet fleece can be used in combination with base layers, other fleeces and down jacket to provide maximum warmth and insulation.
- ) Thermals or base layer for top & bottom (merino wool or synthetic).
- ) Fleece pants. To be worn around camp or added as an additional layer when the temperatures start to drop higher up.
- ) Medium weight down jacket (eg Nuptse jacket by The North Face)

**Handwear:**

- ) Fleece gloves.
- ) Warm mittens and/or gloves.

**Headwear:**

- ) Wool or fleece hat.
- ) Sun hat.
- ) Bandana or scarf. (eg. Buff Headwear check out <http://www.buffwear.com>)
- ) Headtorch. Bring extra batteries.
- ) Sunglasses. The lenses need to be Category 4 rated and should have side protection or wraparound design to prevent light getting through to your eyes that could cause sun blindness.



### **Personal Equipment:**

- ) Sleeping bag. Maximum overnight lows at Thorung Phedi will be around -15 Celsius. Note: it is possible to rent a bag in Kathmandu from Shonas Rental.
- ) Fleece or silk liner for your sleeping bag. A liner protects your sleeping bag from getting dirty and helps by adding extra insulation to keep you warm at night.
- ) Daypack. Recommended size is 30 to 40 litres as you need to have enough space to carry water bottles, camera, snacks and extra clothing such as down jacket etc. It is also a good idea to bring a rain cover to keep the contents dry.
- ) Stuff sacks for keeping your gear dry and organised. Or even better are fold-drybags such as from Exped.
- ) 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.
- ) 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.

) 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).

) Antibiotics. Although we carry antibiotics for the team, it is advisable to bring some of your own. We recommend that you visit your doctor and request one set of antibiotics to treat stomach infection and one for upper respiratory tract infection.