

The Good Life

OUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO THE BEST IN TRAVEL, FASHION, FOOD, DESIGN, TECHNOLOGY AND MORE

TRAVEL

Trekking Not Required

BY JOE COCHRANE

NEPAL—HOME TO EIGHT OF THE WORLD'S 14 TALLEST mountains—may be a favorite destination for climbers and extreme adventurers. But it is also becoming increasingly popular among those who prefer Egyptian cotton sheets and caviar to sleeping bags and protein bars, and whose idea of roughing it means giving up

Nepal doesn't have to be forbidding

JEFF SANTARUCCI—LONELY PLANET IMAGES

4 HOURS IN...



SEVILLE

This sparkling city in the south of Spain, with its white bullring and orange trees, has rich traditions and a cosmopolitan buzz. Find the best of both:

TOUR the immense Gothic cathedral, where Christopher Columbus's tomb is held aloft by four giant statues. Climb the 12th-century Moorish tower for a view of the city.

STROLL through the Real Alcázar, the royal residence of palaces and gardens built in 1364; don't miss the Ambassadors' Hall dome of gilded wood (off the Plaza del Triunfo).

VISIT the new Flamenco Dance Museum in the heart of the old quarter, offering high-tech exhibits as well as exhilarating lessons (Calle Manuel Rojas Marcos, 3).

EAT superb Andalusian food with a modern twist at ... ay, Maricrú!, an upscale bar in the Santa Cruz neighborhood. Try the toasts with brie and sweetened onions, and chocolate fondue (Pasaje de Vila, 6-Bajo)

—NINA SCOTT

heated towel racks. Backpackers are now being joined by "luxury trekkers," who like to put in a full day on the Himalayan trails—but want every creature comfort the moment they walk off.

The Mountain Company runs trekking tours that utilize luxury lodges in Nepal's scenic Everest and Annapurna regions. Managing director Roland Hunter says luxury packages—which promise Western and local cuisine, down blankets and central heating—account for 15 percent of his business, and are growing (from \$2,000 for 12 days; themountaincompany.co.uk).

Ker & Downey Nepal operates its own exclusive lodges and runs tours that minimize the amount of time travelers spend on the trail so they can fully enjoy the accommodations, which include hardwood floors, drinks around a roaring fireplace and breakfast served on an outdoor patio beneath the peaks (\$750 for six days; trekking-nepal.com).

Those keen to enjoy Nepal's mountains only as a backdrop—and wear slingbacks instead of crampons—have plenty of options among the growing ranks of five-star hotels. Most—



Capital pleasures At the Hyatt Regency (above) and Le Meridien hotels in Katmandu, over-exertion is strongly discouraged

including Le Meridien and the Hyatt Regency—are located in the capital, Katmandu, and feature topnotch dining and spa services with unbeatable views. Roughing it never felt so good.

(N) Cochrane reviews the best eateries in Katmandu at extra.Newsweek.com



The Maximalist

Romain Jerome, inventor of specialty timepieces, will launch the Titanic-DNA watch in April, the first in a new series celebrating historical legends. Each one is infused with authentic pieces of the Titanic's rusted steel. The one-time run of 2,012 pieces signifies the 100th anniversary of the Titanic's sinking in 2012. The ultralimited edition has a diamond-set tourbillon device to transmit the time both visually and audibly, and sells for **\$249,000.**