



PROJECT DOSSIER

ANNAPURNA '10'

KATHMANDU TO KATHMANDU

10 days

200 kms

including 100kms trekking

Nepal - Annapurna Region

Itinerary Guideline

FROM KATHMANDU

- Day 1.** In Kathmandu for the morning bicycle tour. After lunch we fly to Pokhara to overnight at a lakeside lodge.
- Day 2.** Trekking (Days 2 to 9, approx. 8 hrs walking per day incl. stops and breaks) Through Mardi Khola valley, padi fields & villages, ascend to Dhampus 1,800m. Camping.
- Day 3.** Ridges & high valleys, to upland birch & rhododendron forests. Views of Machapuchare 6,999m & the Annapurna peaks. Camping.
- Days 4&5.** Hard climbs beyond & above tree-line to highest point at approx. 4,600m on southern flank of Annapurna Massif. Camping.
- Day 6.** Steep descents; terraced hillsides to Modi Khola valley, narrow cable bridges above river, easier walking along valley floor. Camping.
- Day 7.** Descend to Modi Khola Valley.
- Day 8.** Short day to Mardipul. Rest. Modi Khola valley & villages.



- Day 9.** Descend down valley to Pokhara and lake. Overnight at a lodge.
- Day 10.** Drive Pokhara-Kathmandu. Late afternoon arrival.

Highlights & Route

The ideal introduction to Kathmandu and Nepal is our morning cycle tour of the city before our panoramic flight to Pokhara. Pokhara under the shadow of the Annapurna Massif and the giant 'fish-tail' peak of sacred Machapuchare. Pokhara at 900m is Nepal's second city, but only started to grow when malaria was eradicated here 40 years ago. The first road arrived ten years later. Pokhara's beauty comes from its position on Lake Phewa, and the great mountains only a few foothill valleys away. Much of the Himalayan chain distances itself from any easy access, but in western Nepal the Seti Khola valley pushes deep into the encircling high Annapurnas. With most of the peaks here in the 7900m range, our maximum

attained height of 4600m defines this as a 'mid-altitude' trek. The walking is not easy but the pace is relaxed. 13 kms a day is an average distance. We are accompanied by Sherpa guides, and porters. Loads are apportioned by the Sirdar head Sherpa. Porters usually disdain the western backpack, placing everything into a wide conical basket slung on their backs from a headstrap. All we need to carry is a daypack with warm jacket, camera & daily needs. A typical day on the trail dawns with a hot mug of tea thrust into your tent. We start walking after breakfast while the porters break camp. Trails seldom keep to the same level, dropping 600 metres from ridge to valley floor before climbing back again on the other side. But there is no hurry, time to take your own pace, stopping at village tea houses or admiring the view. The porters pass us on the trail to set up camp at the end of our trekking day in the late afternoon.

Our first day's walk meanders through small villages and padi fields before we climb upward on twisting mule trails to the village of Dhampus at 1800m. In the morning we awake to stunning views of Machhapuchare 6999m and the great Annapurnas. We climb upwards through green forests and Gurung villages. Rhododendron woods lead to haunting lichen covered passes while all around is the panorama of 30 Himalayan peaks thrusting high into the crystal air. Dhaulagiri 8167m, Annapurna II 7937m, Manaslu 8156m and Machhapuchare 6999m tower above all. Following a high ridge, the forest thins at 3,030m, and the glistening face of Annapurna South looms above our highest camp. Here we are well away from the main trails. Getting off the beaten path not only affords us the best views here but also brings us into close contact with an unchanged way of life in the high mountain villages. On the sixth day we descend through terraced hillsides to the beautiful Modi Khola valley—a warmer altitude and a welcome bathe in the river. It is easy walking along the valley floor, criss-crossing the river on narrow dipping cable bridges. We reach Mardipul and time to relax, ease the muscles, & explore this quiet villages of this beautiful valley. Return to Pokhara for a last night under the great shadows of familiar peaks; a night to celebrate with our Sherpas before the road back to Kathmandu.

PLEASE NOTE

The ground arrangements for this project are operated by Himalayan Encounters who are our appointed Nepal trekking and whitewater rafting operator. They are one of the most experienced

local operators in Nepal and their services are provided to the highest standard.

GROUP SIZE

18 max. Plus Trek Crew of a trek leader, Nepali sirdhar, sherpas, cooks & porters.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Although no previous trekking experience is needed, a sound level of physical fitness & stamina are definitely required on this trek. Highest altitude is 4,600m and the effects of altitude and oxygen deprivation will be felt. Porters carry our equipment & supplies as well as personal gear, so all you need to carry is a medium sized day-pack. But the hiking consists of repeated ascents & descents between the valleys and ranges and is harsher than mountain walking in Europe/North America etc. Within reason you are able to set your own daily pace on the trek. Turning back mid-way through the trek is not feasible.

THE LOCAL PAYMENT (as in the brochure)

This is the payment made to Himalayan Encounters at the point of departure. This payment must be made paid in US\$ dollars, either in cash notes or recognised Travellers Cheques. This payment completes the total inclusive price of the project. This amount will be utilised by the organisation to cover a proportion but not all of the 'on the ground' running costs of this project. There are no hidden extra payments.

INCLUDED IN PROJECT COST

All transport including the domestic flight to Pokhara, food - 3 meals a day, camping and lodges, equipment & activities as detailed from Day 1 until return to Kathmandu on afternoon/evening of Day 10. Services of staff in Kathmandu & on trek. Porters for personal gear on trek. There are no kitties or en route payments.

PROJECT COST DOES NOT COVER

The Local Payment, payable in Kathmandu. International flights between home & Kathmandu, transfers to/from Kathmandu airport and airport taxes. Vaccinations, visas, personal insurance, laundry, snacks, drinks, tips to porters, personal clothing/equipment & items of a personal nature. Evening meal & accommodation in Kathmandu on Day 10.

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED

Lightweight 2 person tents, kitchen/dining tent, insulated sleeping mats, all domestic & cooking equipment. Field first aid kit.

WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING

A warm 4 seasons sleeping bag, cold weather clothing, medium/large size day-pack, a soft sided bag or backpack, strong boots, water bottle, personal clothing, medicines & toiletries. If you do not already have some of the more specialised clothing or equipment above, a suitable sleeping bag, cold weather jacket, water-bottle, day-pack etc can be hired from local suppliers in Kathmandu at approx US\$7-10 total per day. Flights in and out of Nepal have a 20kg luggage weight limit. A recommended list of what to bring is supplied in the Pre-departure information pack.

TRANSPORT

Domestic flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara. Minibus Pokhara to Kathmandu. Otherwise on foot.

ACCOMMODATION

Camping throughout trek (2 person lightweight tents) with lodge accommodation in Pokhara. No shower facilities after leaving Pokhara but frequent opportunity for river or stream bathing. Accommodation on night 10 in Kathmandu is not included. Reservations in our Kathmandu hotels before Day 1 may be made through Encounter, with payment by you directly to hotel on arrival.

MEALS, COOKING & FOOD

All meals from breakfast on Day 1 until arrival back in Kathmandu on evening of Day 10. (Evening meal Day 10 not included). Roadside meal between Pokhara & Kathmandu on Day 10. All meals on trek prepared by Sherpas and Nepali cooks. Western & Nepali dishes. Camp cooked breakfasts & dinners, picnic style lunches. (local fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, eggs, cheese, preserves, bread, biscuits cereals, hot drinks, canned & dried goods).

PASSPORTS & VISAS

You will need a passport that is valid for not less than **6 months** after the end of the project, and which contains not less than **2 blank pages**. All nationalities require visas for Nepal which should preferably be obtained before you leave home. Their costs vary according to your nationality. Encounter or your agent can advise you of up to date visa details & their costs applicable to you. We can also help you in obtaining one.

INSURANCE

You must have personal Travel Insurance to cover Adventure Travel and it must cover all the aspects described on p60 of the brochure. Please bring a copy of your policy with you to the pre-departure
PD/A10/05 00

meeting. If your policy does not cover this minimum level then Encounter will not accept responsibly for the consequences.

MEDICAL & VACCINATIONS

All vaccination requirements and medical recommendations are detailed in the pre-departure information pack at the time of booking.

PERSONAL SPENDING MONEY

Other than tea or sometimes a cold drink at village tea houses there is little need for money during the trek. The streets & markets of Kathmandu and Pokhara are crammed with tempting goods & handicrafts. Good buys can include woodcarvings, Hindu deity bronzes & statues, Buddhist prayer wheels, religious items & thanka paintings, jewellery, Tibetan carpets made by refugee villages in Nepal. Small & interesting 'treasures' need not cost much at all. Credit cards accepted by most hotels & well-established merchants in Kathmandu only. Other than the above, Encounter has no hidden expenses, funds or kitties to surprise your spending money.

ARRIVING AT START OF THE PROJECT

There will be a pre-departure meeting at our Kathmandu office at 18.00hrs the evening before Day 1. This meeting is also your latest arrival time as trekking permits, requiring your passport, are obtained the following day. If you are arriving earlier there is plenty to see & do in the Kathmandu valley: shopping & city bazaars; palaces & museums; lively cafes, restaurants & bars; hill top Swayambhunath temple (20 mins bicycle), great Bodhnath Stupa (30 mins bicycle), nature reserve (45 mins bicycle), ancient city of Bhaktapur (30 mins bus, 1 hr bicycle), overnight at Nagarkot (45 mins bus) spectacular sunrise/sunset views across Himalayas. Simple bicycles may be hired at small cost from most Kathmandu hotels.

LEAVING AT END OF THE PROJECT

Arrangements end on arrival back at our Kathmandu hotel late on the afternoon/early evening of Day 10. You should not make onward flight arrangements for this same evening. International flights are often overbooked, and late or un-reconfirmed check-ins will be denied boarding with little prospect of another flight out for several days. Any flight connection on the following day could easily be made.

COMBINATIONS & CONNECTING PROJECTS

Days 1 to 9 of 'Annapurna 10' are also days 1 to 9 of the 'Mountain & Wildlife' project that follows the same trek, which continues to Chitwan National Park in the lowlands, whilst you return to Kathmandu.. (Maximum combined group size remains 18).

INTERESTING READING

The Snow Leopard (Peter Matthiessen), The Mountain is Young (Han Suyin), Annapurna (Maurice Herzog). A full list of recommended reading in history, guidebooks and fiction is given in our pre-departure information.

CLIMATE

September to October: Hot days/warm nights/occasional rain in late September.

November to February: Warm days/cool nights/rainfall rare.

March to May: Hot days/warm nights/little or no rainfall.

OTHER COSTS/EXPENSES

- Local Payment
- Return international flights.....
- Visas.....
- Vaccinations.....
- Insurance.....
- Personal spending money.....
- Total _____

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