



PROJECT DOSSIER

NEPAL 'DEKHO'

KATHMANDU to KATHMANDU

14 days

420kms

including 65kms trekking

Nepal - Annapurna Region

Itinerary Guideline

FROM KATHMANDU

Day 1 Arrive Kathmandu, trip preparation, hotel.

Day 2 to 4 Drive Drive to & rafting on the Trisuli River then drive to Pokhara. Lodge.

Days 5 to 8 We walk some the trails of the 'Royal Trek' in the Kalikasthan region. 7 to 8 hours per day including rest stops and lunch. Views of the Annapurna Massif. Camping.

Day 9 We complete our trek and return to Pokhara. Lodge.

Day 10 Drive to the remote town of Bandipur. Lodge.

Days 11 & 12 To Chitwan National Park, game viewing on foot and elephant back through Park. Dugout canoe along Rapti River. Safari Lodge.

Day 13 A full day's drive along the Marsyandi & Trisuli River valleys back to Kathmandu. Hotel.



Day 14 Cycle tour of the old city & valley.

Arrangements end in the afternoon of the last day.

PLEASE NOTE:

The above is intended as a guide only and to indicate a typical itinerary and its highlights. While our intention is to adhere to this, it should be understood that the constraints of weather, road, river & trail conditions may sometimes alter our exact timings.

Highlights & Route

KATHMANDU

The streets of Kathmandu by bicycle, to Durbar Square in the old city, Royal Palace, House of the Living Goddess, Kasthamandap - House of Wood from where the city gets its name. Legend

maintains this meeting place, now a Hindu temple, was built from the wood of a single sal tree. Buddhist temple of Swayambhunath on a hill to the west of the city. Inquisitive monkeys cavort on the long stairway to the temple, twin statues of peacocks, horses, garudas, fierce temple dogs & elephants guard the upper steps. It is believed that the Kathmandu valley was once a giant lake, and Swayambhunath its sacred island. The giant Bodhnath Stupa prayer wheels ring its wide base, strings of prayer flags flutter above the white dome, topped by the all seeing eyes of Buddha, and the third eye, watching over the valley. Across the Bagmati River, the squares of the old city of Patan are a feast of temples, pagodas and courtyards.

THE TRISULI RIVER

The Trisuli, draining the snow melt of the Ganesh and Langtang Himals, gains its name from the Lord Shiva's three-pointed staff or Trisul. Legend has it that the God drove the tip into the ground creating three small lakes which form the headwaters of the river.

There are 10 major rapids (from grade III to IV) on the Trisuli starting with "Beginner's Luck" to the more technical "Pin Ball". This is an exciting, fun river, but the emphasis is always on safety – so no previous rafting experience is necessary, just a yearn for excitement.

Evenings are spent at riverside beach camps, all are welcome to help in preparation of meals & camp set-up.

POKHARA AND THE KALIKISTAN TREK

Pokhara at an altitude of 900m is Nepal's second city, but only started to grow when malaria was eradicated here 40 years ago. The road arrived ten years later. Pokhara's beauty comes from its position on Lake Phewa and the Annapurna Massif only a few foothill valleys away.

Our choice of trekking route into the Kalikistan region provides a wilderness trek through forested Himalayan foothills to a maximum height of 2,600 metres. Whilst our days are full and moderately demanding, this is not by trekking standards a physically enduring trek compared to our other Nepal treks. We are supported by a local sirdar & sherpas, cooks & porters who will provide our camp and meals by night and guide us by day. The views of Lamjung, Annapurna II and Machapuchare are quite spectacular which make this a trek to be remembered.

THE TERAI LOWLANDS

We overnight at the remote town of Bandipur en route to the Royal Chitwan National Park in the low hills along the border with India. This wildlife reserve of tall shaded forests, hidden clearings, and high elephant grass sits astride the sandy & slow moving Rapti River. All the terai lowlands were forest & jungles until the eradication of malaria in the 1950's. Tiger hunts of the aristocracy & the British Raj during the early part of the century frequently killed more of the animals in one day than the total now surviving in Nepal. With malaria gone, hill people moved in to cultivate the rich, flat soil-and wildlife came under further pressure. The 1,000 square kilometre Park & reserve was declared a wildlife sanctuary by the King in 1973 and the animal numbers are now growing strongly again. It is a beautiful haven for the great Asian rhinoceros, elephant, sloth bear, deer, gharial crocodile, langur monkeys, wild pig, several hundred bird species, and the elusive leopard & Bengal tiger. There are now estimated to be 80 tigers and some 400 rhino here. From our Safari Lodge at Sauraha we travel through the Park on elephant back, on foot with a local guide & in dugout canoes along the banks of the Rapti River. We return to Kathmandu where the final day is spent exploring the old city and valley on bicycle.

NB

The ground arrangements for this project are operated by Himalayan Encounters who are our appointed Nepal trekking & white water 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: Rafting crew (1 to 2 crew, 6 to 8 group members per raft, up to 3 rafts), Trek Staff, local guides in Kathmandu & Chitwan National Park. (The rafting crew are normally mixed western & Nepali. The trek crew are Nepali sirdhar, sherpas, cooks & porters & the trek leader.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

This is an active project that requires a sound level of physical fitness & stamina. No previous experience of rafting is required, or even expected. But you must be a competent swimmer and unafraid of the water. We cannot accept bookings from non-swimmers. Rafts are

propelled by group paddle power, not by the helmsman with oars. On trek you need carry no more than a light 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. Highest altitude is 3,056 metres.

THE LOCAL PAYMENT (as in the brochure)

This is the payment made to Himalayan Encounter 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, food - 3 meals a day, accommodation & activities as detailed from Day 1 until return to Kathmandu on afternoon/evening of Day 14. Local guides in Kathmandu on Day 2 & in Chitwan. Safety equipment & gear bags on river, Porters for personal gear on trek. Park entry fees. There are no kitties and en route payments.

PROJECT COST DOES NOT COVER

Local Payment. International flights between home & Kathmandu, transfers to/from Kathmandu airport and airport taxes. Vaccinations, visas, personal insurance, malaria prophylaxis, laundry, snacks, drinks, tips to porters, personal clothing/equipment & items of a personal nature. Some individual entry fees to museums/sights (minimal cost). Evening meal & accommodation in Kathmandu on Day 14.

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED

Buoyancy aids, helmets, waterproof spray jackets & gear bags, tents, domestic & cooking equipment on river. 2 person tents, kitchen/dining tent, insulated sleeping mats, domestic & cooking equipment on trek. Field first aid kits on river & trek.

WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING

A warm sleeping bag, cold weather clothing for trek, day-pack, a medium sized 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 to 10 total per day. Flights in & out of Nepal have a 20kg luggage weight limit.

TRANSPORT

Minibus to/from river, trek Chitwan & return to Kathmandu. Inflatable river rafts (paddled mode); on foot, elephant back & dugout canoe in Chitwan. Bicycles on Day 14 in Kathmandu.

ACCOMMODATION

Guesthouse/hotel in Kathmandu on shared basis (2 nights). Lodge in Pokhara (2 nights). Lodge in Bandipur (1night). Camping on river section and trek, 2 person tents (6 nights). Safari Lodge in Chitwan National Park (2 nights). No shower facilities on the trek and river section but there are frequent opportunities for river and stream bathing. (Your involvement is needed in camp set up, cooking and hygiene whilst on the river) Accommodation on night 14 in Kathmandu is not included. Reservations at Kathmandu hotel before day 1 may be made through Encounter, with payment by you directly to hotel on arrival.

MEALS, COOKING & FOOD

Restaurant & Guesthouse meals in Kathmandu & Bandipur. Camp cooked breakfasts & dinners, picnic lunches on river. Your assistance is needed in cooking & meal preparation while on the river. (Local fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, eggs, cereals, bread, cheese, preserves, canned & dried goods). Similar on trek except all meals are prepared by Sherpas & Nepali cooks - an interesting mix of Western & Sherpa dishes. Western & Nepali dishes from cook in Pokhara & Chitwan Safari Lodge.

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 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:

To cover personal day to day expenditure - drinks, snacks, occasional small souvenirs, individual museum entry fees etc. Good buys can include woodcarvings, Hindu deity bronzes & statues, Buddhist prayer wheels, religious items & thanhka 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 18.00 hrs on the evening of Day 1. If you are arriving earlier there is still a lot to see & do in the Kathmandu valley: shopping & city bazaars; palaces, museums & outlying temples, amazing selection of cafes, restaurants & bars, nature reserve (45 ins bicycle). 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 14. 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

The 'Nepal Dacha' can be combined with 'The High Road to Lhasa' project to form 'Nepal and Tibet' which is 29 days long. Therefore you could be travelling with people who will be continuing on to Tibet.

INTERESTING READING

The Snow Leopard (Peter Matthiessen), The Mountain is Young (Han Suyin), Tiger for Breakfast (Michel Peissel). A full list of recommended reading in history, guidebooks and fiction is given in our pre-departure information.

OTHER COSTS/EXPENSES

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

The information in this dossier has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However, it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and Encounter Overland Ltd.