

Grand Annapurna Traverse, Nepal

Magnificent Annapurna trekking without the crowds, from the eastern foothills over three remote high passes to Jomsom.



Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

Holiday overview

Style	Trek
Accommodation	Hotel, Tea House, Camping
Grade	Strenuous
Duration	27 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 21 days
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Local Trek Leader Nepal
Land only	Joining in Kathmandu, Nepal
Max altitude	5,300m/17,460ft, Kang La Pass, Day 19

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



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Departures

Group departures

2021 Dates:

Sat 25 Sep - Thu 21 Oct

2022 Dates:

Sat 24 Sep - Thu 20 Oct

Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday. If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

Your guide



These treks are led by professionally trained English-speaking Sherpas. We have many very experienced Sherpas living and working in the Annapurna region, for example:

Bhuwan K C

Affectionately called 'KC' and the 2006 winner of the Wanderlust 'Paul Morrison' Guide of the Year award

Durga Kattel

A very experienced guide, who has knowledge of Nepali flora & fauna

Jangbo Sherpa

Another experienced and knowledgeable guide

We cannot guarantee which Sherpa leader will be assigned to any particular departure but this gives you a taste of our Annapurna leaders.

Your trip highlights

- Experience a genuine wilderness trek in the heart of the Annapurna mountains
- Cross three challenging passes: the Kang La, 5,300m, the Mesokanto La, 5,120m and the Namun La, 4,850m
- Enjoy incredible close-up views of the Annapurnas, Machhapuchare, Manaslu and Dhaulagiri
- Look out for exotic birds and rare wildlife. Lynx are found in the area and snow leopard footprints have even been seen on the trail
- Camp at 5,000m at stunning Tilicho lake - a unique experience
- Explore the rabbit-warren alleys of Naar village and sample the local chang or yak butter tea in village houses in Phu

At a glance itinerary

Days 1-3	Fly to Kathmandu. Fly to Pokhara. Drive to Siklis.
Day 4	Start trek. Trek to Tasa.
Days 5-8	Trek to Thurju via Kori.
Days 9-10	Day walk to Dudh Pokhari. Trek across the Namun pass, 4,850m/15,192ft, to Dafne Kharka.
Days 11-12	Trek to Timang and on to Koto.
Days 13-17	Trek to Phugaon via Meta. Acclimatisation day. Trek back to Meta.
Days 18-20	Trek to Naar and to Ngawal across the Kang La, 5,300m/17,388ft. Continue to Manang.
Days 21-23	Trek to Tilicho Phedi Base Camp and High Camp via the Mesokanto La, 5,120m/16,798ft.
Day 24	End trek at Jomsom.
Days 25-27	Fly to Pokhara. Fly to Kathmandu. Overnight flight to London.

Trip summary

Destined to become a Himalayan classic, this spectacular new trek traverses the Annapurna massif, climbing from the idyllic eastern foothills and crossing three high passes before descending to Jomsom in the west. The traverse offers sublime scenery throughout, with unparalleled close-up views of the Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, Lanjung and Manaslu massifs, in addition to plenty of cultural interest along the way.

Your grand adventure starts northeast of Pokhara in the picturesque Gurung village of Siklis. From here you follow an ancient trade route weaving your way through rhododendron and bamboo forests. Eventually you reach open meadows with superb views of the Himalayan giants of the Lamjung Himal and Annapurna Massif, including the iconic fishtail peak of Machhapuchare. After a week of trekking through wonderfully wild uninhabited terrain you reach the first of your three high passes, the Namun La at 4,850m. The ascent is tough, and the descent steep but the superb views from the pass offer ample reward. This pass rarely sees trekkers, indeed perhaps snow leopards are more common than trekkers here, their prints having been found below the pass in recent years.

From the Namun La you descend and briefly join the busy Annapurna Circuit at Timang before once again heading off into the wilderness, this time north towards the Tibetan border, and the isolated fortified hill village of Phu. The dramatic landscape is more Tibetan here, lying as it does in the rain shadow of the Himalaya and there are astonishing 360 degree views of the surrounding peaks from the monastery above Phu village. Continuing the traverse westward you come next to the friendly village of Naar. Trekkers are rarely seen here and you will likely be given a warm welcome, sometimes with traditional butter tea. Suitably fortified you go on to tackle the highest and most demanding of your three high passes, the Kang La, 5,300m. After enjoying another night back in 'civilisation' on the Annapurna Circuit, the final epic section of the trek takes you upwards and eastwards skirting the shores of Tilicho Lake, one of the highest in the world, and over the Mesokanto La, 5,300m. From here it is all downhill to Jomsom where reluctantly you leave the wilderness behind and return to the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu.

This superb challenging Annapurna traverse is a worthy successor to the busy Annapurna Circuit which has sadly now been spoilt by roads at both ends.

Your trip itinerary

Day 1: Depart London.

Depart London on your overnight flight to Kathmandu.

Overnight: In flight

Day 2: Arrive Kathmandu. Group transfer to hotel.

On arrival in Kathmandu you will be transferred to the Shangri La Hotel. Kathmandu is a wonderful mixture of the ancient alongside the modern. Crowded bazaars still throng with local ethnic people today as they have for centuries, while roads are jammed with rickshaws, cars, roaring motorbikes and buses. Ancient temples and crumbling shrines sit alongside modern offices, picturesque palaces slowly sag into dereliction while Buddhist stupas gaze over the bustling scene with their all seeing eyes. Although this is a crowded, noisy and polluted city it is also friendly, fascinating and vibrant. Tonight you may choose to eat at the hotel, or you could head off into Thamel to one of the famous restaurants there, such as the Rum Doodle Restaurant, a place frequented by trekkers and climbers alike, with pride of place given to a board with the signatures of many Everest summiteers.

Overnight: Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu

Day 3: Fly to Pokhara, 826m/2,713ft. Drive to Siklis, 1,800m/6,510ft - approximately 5 hours.

You will be met at your hotel and taken to the airport for your flight to Pokhara. This is a spectacular and exciting flight in its own right passing over the Himalayan foothills with views of the main range. From Pokhara it takes about five hours to reach Siklis, although this dirt road is a challenging drive so the driving time totally depends on the road condition. The drive is highly scenic with great views of the Lamjung Himal and Machhapuchare, the Fishtail Peak. The dirt road is rough and stony so be prepared for a long, slow, bumpy ride, but the fantastic scenery is ample compensation as the road twists and turns, mainly upwards, to Siklis. Siklis is a thriving, lively village populated by around 2,500 people. It's in a very picturesque setting. You will stay in a tea house here overnight.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 4: Trek from Siklis to Tasa, 2,350m/7,710ft - 5 hours.

Leaving Siklis you begin your epic trek descending initially on a good trail with stone steps. From the very start there are fantastic views of the Lamjung Himal and Annapurna II as you head out of the village. After about 1½ hours you reach a suspension bridge that leads to a stony uphill trail. You may see or hear woodpeckers on the attractive wooded hillside here. It will take you approximately 2½ - 3 hours to reach your lunch spot, usually taken where there is a stone water tap for the crew to use. After lunch you weave your way up steep stone steps through forested hillside for a further 1½ - 2 hours until you reach a clearing - your campsite for the night is at 2,350m/7,710ft at Tasa. There is a stone shelter here built by ACAP. There are spectacular views at the edge of the campsite of the Lamjung Himal and the Annapurna range. The distant rumbling of avalanches on Annapurna II and IV can often be heard.



Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 5: Trek from Tasa to overnight camp at 3,500m/11,483ft - 6 hours.

You can enjoy the early morning views at your campsite before heading off on a trail which rises gently through the forest for 1-1½ hours to a clearing with a view of Fishtail Peak and a small shrine with prayer flags. You continue your gradual ascent through oak forest, passing the odd area of grazing land. This uninhabited region is home to much wildlife including Himalayan black bear, danfe, musk deer and Himalayan thar. After around three hours walking, you will have lunch in the forest near a water tank.

The trail continues upwards through rhododendron and bamboo forest, passing sheep grazing clearings. You eventually reach a clearing at around 3,500m/11,483ft which will be your campsite for the night. There can be problems here though with a lack of water which may mean continuing to Kori at 3,850m/12,631ft.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 6: Trek to Kori, 3,850m/12,631ft - 3 hours.

Today's walk involves approximately 3 hours of ascending through forest to reach Kori, which has a stone shelter, a goat hut and an ACAP sign. It's a wild, remote place with stunning views of the surrounding hillside and snow-capped peaks.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 7: Trek to Thulo Lekh, 4,100m/13,451ft - 3 hours.

There are fantastic views of Fishtail Peak and surrounding snow-capped summits to be had on the ridge above the campsite. You follow a good undulating dirt trail contouring along the hillside through scrubland. The path is a little narrow and stony at times. After 1½ hours walking, the trail opens out into a large meadow. Another hour or so brings you to an ACAP signpost to Dudh Pokhari and you continue following the red and white ACAP poles to Thulo Lekh. Alternatively your guide may suggest a 15 minute descent to the river and overnight camp. If you stay down by the river at 3,900m/12,795ft, you can take a pleasant afternoon acclimatisation hike to the lake and back.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 8: Trek to Thurju, 4,080m/13,385ft - 6 hours.

Today's route is a spectacular one crossing two passes over 4,000m/13,123ft. You begin by walking up the valley following the river on a trail which becomes a boulder field as you approach the high point of the day - Rambrong Ridge pass at 4,500m/14,764ft, adorned with prayer flags. It takes around 2 hours to reach the pass. From here there are superb views of the Manaslu range of peaks, Lamjung Himal, and Annapurnas towards the west. You then descend slightly on a good path, following the odd red arrow here and there, and contour around the hillside. After 1-1½ hours from the first (highest) pass you reach the second pass at 4,380m/14,371ft - Furju Deurali, which is marked by some cairns and an ACAP sign. There are stunning views of Manaslu from here.



Leaving the pass it's approximately 1-1½ hour's descent to your campsite at 4,080m/13,385ft. If there's any snow on the steeper sections of the descent path, you'll need to take care with your footing.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 9: Day walk to Dudh Pokhari.

For added acclimatisation, you can walk up to the holy lake of Dudh Pokhari where pilgrims visit in August.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 10: Trek over Namun Pass, 4,850m/15,912ft - 4½ hours. Descend to Dafne Kharka , 4,250m/13,946ft - 2 hours.

Today you begin by walking on the flat, before descending to the river, crossing it and beginning your long ascent to the pass. The trail is fairly steep to begin with - route-finding is made easy though even if snow has obliterated the path due to ACAP's helpful poles at regular intervals. A zig zag path goes up to your right underneath a huge rock wall. At the top of this (2 hours) there are a few prayer flags and it flattens out. You then head round to the left, gazing down at last night's campsite and a beautiful lake. There are fantastic views of snowy peaks all around. The path is never too steep and is well marked with poles. You will feel the altitude though as you make your final climb to the pass at 4,850m/15,912ft, marked with prayer flags and an ACAP sign. There wonderful views of Manaslu here. The descent to Dafne Kharka, 4,250m/13,946ft, gives further glorious vistas and has some steep sections which require care if snow-covered. Snow leopard footprints have previously been seen here so keep your eyes peeled!



Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 11: Trek to Timang 2,750m/9,022ft - 4 hours.

After an initial 10 minute climb up to the ACAP sign at 4,280m/14,042ft, you descend on a good trail in open hillside to begin with, which then winds through the forest all the way to Timang. It's definitely a day for trekking poles to save the knees. At Timang you are very much returning to civilisation with tea houses and the jeep road through the Annapurna Circuit that goes to Manang. You'll spend the night at a tea house and can enjoy such luxuries as a hot shower and/or a beer!

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 12: Trek to Koto, 2,600m/8,530ft - 2 hours.

Today is a short and relatively easy day on the trail, and you will probably see plenty of Annapurna Circuit trekkers along the way. You begin by walking on fairly flat terrain through a dense forest of pine, oak, maple and rhododendron, then pass through the village of Thanchowk and cross a suspension bridge. Beyond the river you will come to another village called Thanchok, and further up the trail here you may get a sight of Annapurna II soaring into the sky. The path then merges with the main Annapurna Circuit, scattered here with huge boulders that over time have fallen through the surrounding trees. Descending through woodland you arrive in the village of Koto which sits in the shadow of Annapurna II, and on your right you will see the Naw Khola joining the Marshyangdi from a northern valley. In Koto there is a small gumpa adorned with brightly coloured paints. You will have plenty of time to relax in Koto this afternoon and make the most of the comforts of the Annapurna Circuit before you head back off-the-beaten-track tomorrow.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 13: Trek to Chhaucha Oder, 3,010m/9875ft - 4-5 hours.

This morning you will need your permits ready, as you will be passing through the checkpoint that separates Naar and Phu from the Annapurna Circuit. From here on in you are unlikely to see another group and if you do, it's likely to be a group of mountaineers on their way to summit attempts of the 7,000m plus peaks that loom at the end of this valley. Firstly you cross the Marshyangdi River to start the ascent up the Naar Phu valley. You will notice, once you leave the main trail, that the path changes into a narrower track which requires more attention when trekking. Initially the trail has been created by blasting into the rock in places. You ascend through beautiful pine forest, crossing the Phu Khola three times on suspension bridges. The walk is mostly in the shade of a deep gorge with views of the Annapurna wall behind you. There are few tea houses along the way today, just the occasional basic tea shop or cave so it is important to be topped up with water before you leave. Today you will stop for the night in the middle of dense, mixed forest at a place called Chaucha Oder (oder meaning cave). This is not a village but was traditionally a place used as shelter by sheep herders and the people of Naar Phu travelling up the gorge. Now there are a few tea shops here, one of which offers accommodation. You will arrive in time for lunch and have an afternoon to relax.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 14: Trek to Meta, 3,560m/11,679ft - 4-5 hours.

Today you trek through mixed forest of pine and juniper and mixed scrub. You cross several suspension bridges and pass some hot springs, to reach Dharmasala. From Dharmasala you ascend through juniper scrub to reach the Meta stream which you cross and then ascend to your first pass on loose moraine and glacier debris. From the pass you will be greeted by the welcome sight of tonight's stop, the remote mountain town of Meta. The village provides a great vantage point to take in all the views, which stretch back to where you have been and in front to where you are going - the Kang la. You will have the afternoon to rest and relax.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 15: Trek to Phu, 4,200m/13,799ft - 7-8 hours.

The walk today is quite long with lots of ups and downs, but with stunning views all along the route to take your mind off your exertions. You start today with views to the other side of the valley where you will be trekking past in a few days' time (Mahendra Pul). As you follow the valley up to Phu, you will be shaded from the morning sun for the first couple of hours of the day. As you start to climb past gompas and seasonal shepherds' huts, you may notice the high altitude flower Edelweiss growing in beautiful bunches.



With dramatic vistas up to the Kangaru glacier on your right, you make your way up to Kyang, a settlement used by the shepherds in winter when Phu is too cold for the livestock. From here it's down to the valley floor to follow the Phu Khola River upstream. Keep an eye out on the other side of the valley for blue sheep clambering over the rock face. The price you pay for reaching Phu is a short sharp climb up to the gates marking the start of the village territory. From here it is a gentle walk into this beautiful village and your tea house for the next two nights.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 16: Acclimatisation walk to Tashi Choling Gompa, 4,746m/15,571ft, and return to Phu - 2-3 hours.

Today you have time to rest and acclimatise with gentle walks around the village and up to the Tibetan influenced hilltop monastery, a sign of the close links Phu has with Tibet. The border with Tibet is not much further north of Phu and in the past the local villagers would regularly trade with their Tibetan neighbours. As such the village is a fascinating mixture of cultures. The village itself resembles a hill fort and is a rabbit warren of little paths and tracks leading to people's homes and barley stores. The main crop here is barley which is harvested in early October, a time when the whole village is alive with activity.

The walk up to Tashi Choling Monastery is well worthwhile both for the cultural interest of the gompa itself and the views of the summit of Pokharkan, 6,346m/20,820ft. It's also valuable for acclimatisation. It's fascinating to walk around the gompa and take in all the little details from the slate carvings to the numerous gompas and prayer flags. You return back to the campsite at Phu.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 17: Trek to Meta, 3,560m/11,679ft - 6-7 hours.

Today you will follow the trail back down the valley you climbed up a couple of days ago. The walk should be a bit quicker today as you are losing more altitude than gaining and your legs will be stronger from the rest day. As you retrace your steps it's surprising how different the scenery looks heading the other way. You will arrive back in Meta to see the familiar faces from a few days ago greeting you.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 18: Trek to Naar, 4,200m/13,780ft - 3-4 hours.

It's a half day walk to Naar, but the morning still involves a fair amount of climbing so take it steady and enjoy the views. As you approach Mahendra Pul you will see the wire bridge that crosses the valley, with a long drop and a river underneath. You may want to pay a visit to the monastery on the other side to give your thanks for a successful crossing. There are in fact two monasteries on this side and it is worth visiting both of them, noting the contrasting styles of traditional and contemporary. Later in the morning you reach a large stone wall that marks the outer limits of Naar village. The main livestock here is the woolly yak; they are big creatures and should be treated with respect, so don't get too close!



As you pass the gumpa situated inside the wall you will get your first glimpse of Naar. It's very different from Phu and a lot more open, with more farming land. The houses themselves are all linked by small wooden ladders and narrow paths and it is fascinating to go for a walk about and to meet the incredibly friendly local people. The village has four beautiful monasteries in the north, south, east and west.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 19: Trek to Ngawal, 3,660m/12,008ft, via the Kang La, 5,300m/17,388ft - 8-9 hours.

Today you will be crossing your first pass over 5,000m/16,404ft, so an early start is a good idea, Be sure to take plenty of water as there are limited options once you set off. The local villagers will already be up and working away. You walk through the village gates and start climbing and the next 4 plus hours will be spent heading up to the pass, so it is best not to set off too fast. As you start climbing you will notice the water channels created for irrigation and the local hydro-electric power station.

The best views of the Annapurna range are to be found on the other side of this pass. As you reach the jagged ridge line at the top of the Kang La you will have time to sit down and enjoy the spectacular view and take all the pictures you want. From here it will be downhill all the way to Ngawal. The trail is quite steep to start with, but it levels out as you make your way down. As you look back up to the pass it's hard to grasp the scale as there are no trees to help you judge distances. After about 3 hours you will reach Ngawal and your stop for tonight.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 20: Trek to Manang, 3,540m/11,614ft - 3-4 hours.

It is only a half day walk today to Manang through the pine forests with views back up to the Kang La reminding you just how high you were yesterday. As you make your way back towards the main Annapurna circuit trail, there will be a few indications that you are reaching 'civilisation' again, with German bakeries and fresh coffee on offer on your walk towards Manang. As you approach the town you will notice various other side walks heading off from the main trail, but none of these are quite as stunning as Tilicho Lake, where you are heading in a few days.

The village of Manang is the largest on your trek and offers such luxuries as hot showers, the internet and a cinema (DVD player and a projector). Lots of trekkers take a rest day here, before making their way up to the Thorung la Pass. As you marvel at just how much oxygen there is down here at 3,500m/11,482ft, for most people here it will be the highest point of their walk so far and they may well be wheezing their way up through the village.

You should arrive in time for lunch leaving all afternoon to explore the town and visit the various cafes offering fresh coffee, apple pies and muffins.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 21: Trek to Tilicho 'Phedi' Base Camp, 4,150m/13,616ft - 6-7 hours.

Leaving Manang for the next section of your epic journey you trek to Khangsar village, which is around a three hour walk away. As you leave Manang be sure to give the mani wheels a spin for good karma on your onward journey. Trekking along a wide trail, don't forget to look behind you as there are lovely views back down the valley towards Manang. Just before you reach Kangsar, the ancient gumpa of Tasab is well worth a visit.

The trail is alive with the smell of fresh mint and large birds of prey soar majestically overhead. Once past Khangsar the trail is prone to landsides as the path contours round the side of the mountain. The views are expansive and epic, but it's best not to hang around too long for pictures!

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 22: Trek to Tilicho High Camp, 4,985m/16,355ft - 5-6 hours.

After breakfast at your tea house you will set off for high camp. This morning there are a couple of stream crossings; be careful first thing as the path can be icy and makes the crossings difficult. The trail zigzags upwards, continually climbing, but at a steady gradient. Every time you stop to catch your breath the beauty of the area amazes you.

As you approach the top of the pass the tall upturned stones used to mark the path in winter make you think of how different this pass would be in heavy snow.

As you reach the top and make your way round to the viewpoint the first thing to strike you is how impossibly turquoise this glacial lake is, then the sheer scale surprises you. The left hand side of the lake is a mixture of glacier and the rock face of the Tilicho range. After some time relaxing with a cup of hot tea and taking pictures it will be time to head to your campsite for the night, which is about an hour's walk around the lake.

Tonight will be your first night of camping. The tents will be set up for you and dinner will be a delicious feast prepared by your camp chef. The campsite for tonight is next to a beautiful glacial stream and the sound of the babbling water will lull you to sleep.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 23: Trek to Yak Kharka, 4,100m/13,451ft, via the Mesokanto La, 5,120m/16,798ft - 6-7 hours.

After a lovely camp breakfast and some hot cups of tea it is time to start walking again, as you make your way to the last high pass of the trip, the Mesokanto La. There is a fair amount of up and down on today's walk and you actually reach a high point fairly early on in the day's walk at nearly 5,300m/17,388ft. From here it's downhill to a mixture of boulder and slate fields.

The path then starts climbing again and heads up to a ridge line with great views back to the lake, from exactly the other side of the lake that you were on only yesterday. From here it's onwards to the Mesokanto La and the rhino horn shaped rock that marks the pass. As you reach the pass you will be greeted by another stunning 360 degree panorama. The mountains in front of you are the Dhaulagiri range with the highest peak at 8,167m/26,794ft. From here it's a steep downhill path to tonight's campsite at Yak Kharka.



Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 24: Trek to Jomsom, 2,800m/9,186ft - 4-5 hours.

This is the last day of walking on the trek and it will be all downhill. After another delicious camp meal last night and breakfast this morning, it is time to make your way to Jomsom. The landscape changes from shrub-like bushes to sparse trees to desert-like features the further you head down the valley. Far off in the distance you will notice the runway at Jomsom. You will get a sense of the scale of this area when you notice how tiny the planes look as they take off. There is still a fair amount of walking to do.

As you gradually make your way down and reach Jomsom, you will notice that compared to your remote nights of camping, this little town seems more like a bustling metropolis. For the first time in a good few days you will

see vehicles with 4 wheels and you may get a swift reminder that you are no longer 'king of the road' with the honk of a lorry's horn. After a hot shower and a cold drink it's time for dinner and the opportunity to celebrate with your trekking crew, and to thank them for all their hard work.

Overnight: Tea House (Meals: BLD)

Day 25: Fly from Jomson to Pokhara. Afternoon flight to Kathmandu.

Today you will leave the Annapurnas behind and fly back to Kathmandu via Pokhara. On arrival in Kathmandu you will be met at the airport and transferred back to the Shangri La Hotel. The rest of the day is yours to relax and enjoy your last evening in Nepal before returning home.

Overnight: Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu (Meals: B)

Day 26: Time at leisure. Late afternoon transfer to airport for overnight flight to London.

You have most of the day free to enjoy some final souvenir shopping or sightseeing, or simply to relax and enjoy the facilities at your hotel. Later in the afternoon there will be a group transfer to the airport for your overnight flight back to London.

Overnight: In flight (Meals: B)

Day 27: Arrive London.

Our grading system

Grand Annapurna Traverse is graded as a Strenuous trekking holiday, as described below.

Strenuous

Our strenuous trekking holidays can involve anything from 10 to 30 days on trek and are often in remote areas, far from 'civilisation'. Rest days are interspersed but there may be up to 7 consecutive days of hard walking. Most treks reach altitudes of at least 4,900m/16,000ft and there will be a great deal of ascent and descent. The majority of our strenuous treks utilise camping, tea house or mountain lodge accommodation.

These holidays are suitable for fit individuals who have regular experience of mountain walking.

Trip altitude

Important - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend www.medex.org.uk as a good source of information.

What the price includes

Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

What's included:

- ✓ English-speaking Sherpa leader
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK & UK departure tax (flight inclusive only)
- ✓ Single, timed, group airport transfers for international flights on arrival and departure
- ✓ All internal flights and hotel transfers
- ✓ Good standard hotel accommodation in Kathmandu on twin share, bed and breakfast basis
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ A good quality down jacket, 4 season sleeping bag and fleece liner (supplied in-country)
- ✓ Tea house accommodation or full service camping arrangements on trek
- ✓ Full portorage of baggage
- ✓ All meals on trek including tea and coffee, and boiled drinking water
- ✓ A free high-quality Mountain Kingdoms kit bag
- ✓ Oxygen (to be administered by the trek guide in the rare case of a medical emergency)
- ✓ Sherpa/porters properly insured and equipped
- ✓ Park fees
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ The opportunity to attend one of our pre-trip meet in the Cotswolds

Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

What's not included:

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Lunch and evening meals in Kathmandu
- ✗ Tips

Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate.

For further information about our campaign visit [For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>](https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign).

Your accommodation

We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu

The Shangri La Hotel is a 4* hotel of character, just a stone's throw from the British Embassy and only a 20 minute walk or short taxi ride into the popular tourist area of Thamel. The hotel has a swimming pool, a lovely, landscaped garden, and a choice of restaurants and bars. Recent entertainment additions include a casino and fitness centre.



Tea Houses

Tea houses are a long established tradition in the trekking regions of Nepal, providing an important source of income for the local people. They vary in size and quality. Tea houses offer simple accommodation comprising twin bedded rooms and basic toilets - not usually en suite. Many tea houses also offer rudimentary hot showers for a small fee. Some tea houses have a limited supply of solar powered electricity but this is not always the case so have a head torch handy. Meals are taken in a communal dining area which is warmed by a wood or yak-dung burning stove. Most trekkers relax here for the evening.



For various reasons, it is not possible to guarantee single rooms in tea houses. If you are travelling without a companion and would like a single this may sometimes be possible upon payment of a small supplement on the spot (usually around \$10). Alternatively, if the tea house has an odd number of guests on the night you may be lucky and find yourself in a room on your own. However it is more likely you will share with someone (of the same sex obviously). This would most likely be someone within your group but when the tea houses are busy, it could even be someone else. Be prepared for this! We do however offer the option of a single room in your hotel in Kathmandu for a supplement.



Camping

For the nights you will be camping the following are provided: a sleeping tent, a dining tent, a toilet tent exclusively for your group to use. The staff complement of cooks, put up and take down tents, make the tea, cook the food, wash the dishes, and load the porters or pack animals. Your kit bag is carried for you either by porters or pack animals and you just trek with a light day sack.

Meal arrangements

All meals on trek. Bed and breakfast in Kathmandu.

Flight arrangements

Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

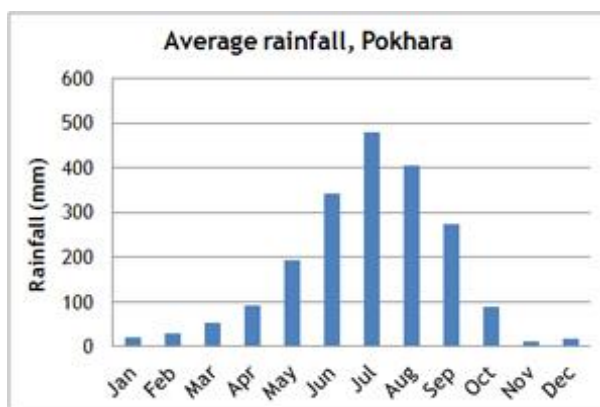
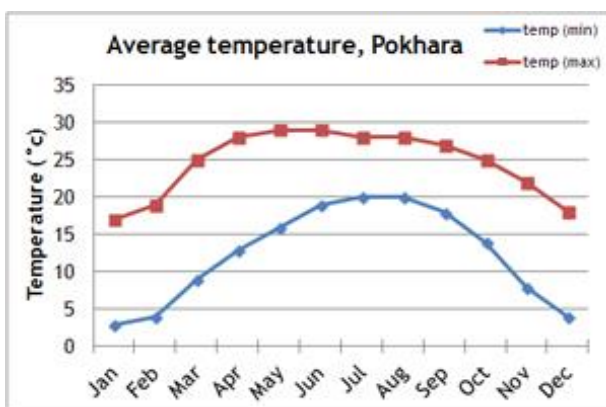
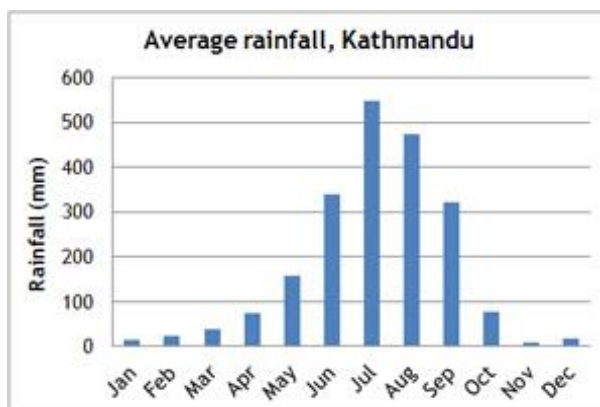
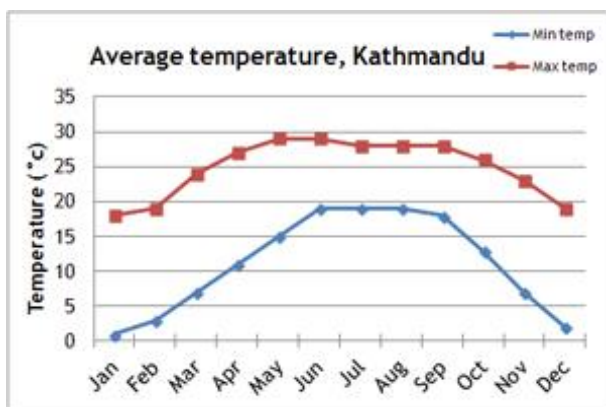
Further information

When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

The nature of adventure travel

Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

Climate information



Extensions

Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at www.mountainkingdoms.com.



Extra nights in Nepal

If you would like to extend your stay in Nepal, you can add extra nights at your group tour accommodation or choose from our range of distinctive properties in Pokhara and the Kathmandu area. We can offer luxury resorts, heritage hotels, tranquil lodges and characterful cottages. Our selection includes Dwarika's hotel in Kathmandu and its sister property - Dwarika's Resort at Dhulikhel, Pavilions Himalaya at Pokhara, Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge and Shivapuri Heights Cottage. Individual extension leaflets for all these options can be downloaded from our website or requested from our office.



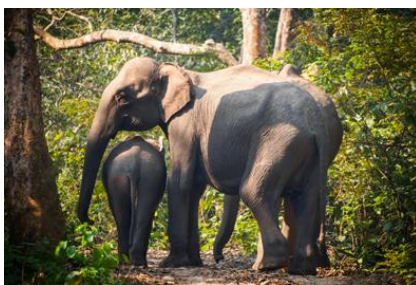
Kathmandu Valley sightseeing excursions

We can arrange half day or full day sightseeing tours taking you to the key cultural attractions of central Kathmandu or the Kathmandu Valley including the World Heritage Sites of Bhaktapur and Patan. Your tour will be led by an English-speaking guide and you will have a private vehicle and driver.



Bhutan and Tibet extensions from Nepal

Whilst in the Himalaya, why not extend your Nepal holiday with a tour of the cultural highlights of Bhutan or Tibet. We offer several extension packages that include all accommodation, meals and sightseeing or we can tailor an itinerary to suit your exact requirements. Download extension leaflets for our Bhutan and Tibet extensions from Nepal, or contact the office to discuss various options.



Wildlife extensions in Nepal - Chitwan, Bardia & Koshi Tappu

Visit Chitwan or Bardia National Parks home to a rich variety of birds and animals including elephant, rhinos, leopard and Bengal tiger. Stay in a comfortable lodge and enjoy a range of wildlife viewing activities. Alternatively visit the renowned Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve - one of the finest birdwatching and wildlife areas in all Asia.



Lumbini

Enjoy a three day extension to the birthplace of Buddha, one of the most important Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the world. Take the short flight from Kathmandu, and spend two nights in a comfortable 3* hotel, just steps from the Lumbini temple complex, with a full day to explore the fascinating UNESCO World Heritage Site in the company of your expert local guide.

Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

- This trek is unique to Mountain Kingdoms and offers a genuine wilderness experience.
- The itinerary has been carefully designed to ensure good acclimatisation.
- You'll be provided with a free, good quality sleeping bag and duvet jacket for the duration of your trek.
- We carry oxygen on this trip which our guide will administer in the rare event of someone suffering the severe effects of high altitude mountain sickness
- Accommodation on trek is a mix of tea houses, where available, and excellent full service camping. You will stay in a good quality hotel in Kathmandu.
- We have a maximum group size of 12 for this trip. This provides for a genuine small group travel experience and helps reduce the negative aspects often associated with larger trekking groups.
- We research our new holidays ourselves and Operations Manager Niki Morgan has trekked extensively in the Annapurnas. If you have any questions about this trip please contact Niki who will be happy to help.
- We offer a flexible service and can extend your holiday with extra hotel nights, upgrades and exciting activities.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- We are an IATA accredited agent and work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: www.mountainkingdoms.com or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

What our clients say



It's incredible that a trek so close to the Annapurna Circuit feels so incredibly remote. After you leave the village of Siklis on day 1 of the trek, you really are in wilderness terrain. The trail has fantastic scenery throughout, with many snow-capped Himalayan peaks, dramatic high passes, a holy lake that pilgrims visit in the summer, traditional villages where you will get a very warm welcome and fine rhododendron forests.

- Niki Morgan, Operations Manager, Mountain Kingdoms



This really was a trip of a lifetime. I loved every part of this trek, from the satisfaction of crossing the challenging mountain passes, through to the remoteness of the beautiful high mountain villages and camping at the stunning Tilicho lake. I can't wait to go back!

- Mr D, Gloucestershire (Naar Phu Trek)

Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

Truly independent

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

Complete financial security

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

No Surcharge Guarantee

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

Award winning Responsible Tourism

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Genuine small group travel

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

Loyalty Discount

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

Comprehensive information

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit www.tourismdeclares.com

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

Carbon Offsetting

Already doing:

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

Will do:

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

Already doing:

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

Will do:

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

