

ANNAPURNA IN STYLE

Ker and Downey Luxury Lodges



Unique luxury Nepal trekking holiday

- Seven days of trekking in the beautiful Annapurna region
- Luxury lodges and spectacular Annapurna views
- Kathmandu sightseeing, including Bhaktapur
- Kathmandu Airport transfers and all meals included during trek



Nepal, Trek & Walk, 13 Days

7 nights luxury lodge, 1 nights hotel, 4 nights hotel with swimming pool, ,
max group size: 10, 7 days trekking, max
Altitude - 2200 metres



Introduction

This superb, easy-paced trekking holiday has been refined and extended for 2017 and provides the perfect introduction to the foothills of the Nepal Himalaya. We start out with a city sightseeing tour in Kathmandu, before flying on to Nepal's second city, Pokhara. Six days of trekking then takes us to some of the prettiest villages in the valley of the Modi Khola, on the south side of the Annapurnas. Staying in comfortable and characterful Ker and Downey lodges, with twin-share rooms and en-suite facilities, we will be able to enjoy some of the most picturesque landscapes in Nepal. Lush, green farmland, terraced fields, tumbling streams, smiling villagers and the backdrop of some of the world's great peaks, including Annapurna 1 and the stunning 'Fish Tail' peak of Machhapuchhre. Walking through rhododendron forest, with tree orchids, magnificent magnolias and several species of monkey, we will stay each night at a different lodge, each with its own particular charm, great food and outstanding views. Returning to Pokhara, we spend a night at a very comfortable resort hotel, before making the short drive to the Newari village of Bandipur. Famed for the quality of its architecture, which dates back several hundred years, this is a great place to spend a couple of nights, do some exploring, meet the Nepali people and soak up those final views of the Himalayas. Our Ker and Downey lodge close to Bandipur is called the Three Mountain Lodge for good reason. Three of the world's 8000 metre peaks can be seen from our private balconies - Dhaulagiri, Annapurna and Manaslu. Using first class hotel accommodation in Kathmandu and absolutely the best standard of lodge available on the south side of the Annapurnas, this really is a 'pampered' one week trekking holiday.

Is this holiday for you?

This trekking holiday in the foothills of the Annapurnas is neither difficult nor sustained. We use well-established and maintained trails throughout. There are only 4 days of trekking and each day's walk will include around 3 - 4 hours of walking, possibly spread out over a longer day including stops and visits. The maximum altitude reached on the trip is around 2200 metres which is low for a Nepal trekking holiday and we do not anticipate any problems with acclimatisation to the altitude.

Holiday Itinerary

Day 1: Meet at the group hotel in Kathmandu. Transfers from Kathmandu Airport are provided.

Welcome to Nepal! On arrival in Kathmandu, you will be met at the airport by your representative. They will have YMH signboard if you have booked directly or the logo of travel agent if you are through your agent.

There is a short drive to your hotel. You'll be served with welcome drink and given keys to your rooms. Rest of the day is for you to prepare for the trek. We have group welcome dinner where you will be introduced to your other members joining the adventure with you. Your leader will brief you on the program. If you have any questions on the trip, it is the right time to ask.

ACCOMMODATION - HOTEL WITH SWIMMING POOL

MEALS – D

Day 2: A free day in Kathmandu with a half-day sightseeing tour.

Today we have arranged a half day's guided sightseeing tour of several of the main sights of the Kathmandu valley such as Budhanath Stupa, Pashupatinath temple & Bhaktapur Durbar Square, listed under UNESCO World heritage sites. After sightseeing, the rest of the day is free for you to relax by the hotel's garden or swimming pool. In the evening we meet for dinner with our guide and a group briefing.

ACCOMMODATION - HOTEL WITH SWIMMING POOL

MEALS – BLD

Day 3: Fly via Kathmandu to Pokhara. Then transfer to the roadhead and trek to Birethanti (1025m).

Returning to the airport in the early morning we will check in at the domestic terminal for the highly scenic 30 minute flight to Nepal's second city, Pokhara. This spectacular flight offers views of the Langtang, Manaslu and Annapurna ranges. We are met on arrival at Pokhara Airport and taken by vehicle (1 hour) to the start of our walk. Together with our local trek crew, we then follow a trail through the lower foothills of the Annapurnas with surrounding views of the Pokhara Valley. Finally we descend to the very comfortable Ker and Downey Sanctuary Lodge in the valley of the Modi Khola. Lunch is at the lodge and there is the option in the afternoon to walk to the nearby village of Birethanti (1025m).

ACCOMMODATION - COMFORT LODGE

MEALS - BLD

Day 4: Trek to the Ker and Downey Himalaya Lodge in Ghandruk (2012m).

After breakfast, we leave the lodge and walk out through farmland and scattered small farms, following the course of the Modi Khola, which is the river flowing down from the Annapurna Sanctuary. We follow the river's true right bank, heading generally northwards and with the impressive sacred peak of Machhapuchhre (Fish Tail) ahead of us. Soon we begin to climb out of the valley and up towards the mountains. The trail passes through small hamlets, terraced rice fields and forests with spectacular views of the surrounding valley. Snacks are provided along the trail. We arrive at the Himalaya Lodge in Ghandruk in the early afternoon and a hot lunch is served on arrival. There are fantastic views from the lodge of the arrayed peaks of the Annapurna Massif.

ACCOMMODATION - COMFORT LODGE

MEALS - BLD

Day 5: We trek across the valley of the Modi Khola to Landruk (1565m).

After enjoying a relaxing breakfast and the glorious views from the Himalaya Lodge, we start our trek to Landruk. After leaving the village of Ghandruk, the trail descends steeply to the banks of the Modi River. Here, we will be able to see some of the cliffs where the famed honey hunters of Nepal climb on ropes to raid the nests of the world's largest (and most dangerous) honey bees. We cross the river on a sturdy suspension bridge and from here trek up on a switchback trail to the village of Landruk. Here, we have more great views of the Annapurna range. After lunch at the Ker and Downey La Bee Lodge, our guide will take us on a sightseeing tour of this pretty mountain village.

ACCOMMODATION - COMFORT LODGE

MEALS - BLD

Day 6: We trek south-eastwards across the grain of the country to Majhgaon (1400m).

Leaving Landruk and the valley of the Modi Khola, today's walk contours the valley-side to the east and heads south, with fairly minor undulations, passing through picturesque villages and farmland with great views looking back to the Annapurnas. We will reach the Ker and Downey Gurung Lodge near to Majhgaon in time for lunch. The lodge is built to resemble a traditional Nepalese village and every room has spectacular views of the surrounding valley and mountains. The afternoon can be spent in the lodge gardens or we can opt to do some exploration to nearby villages with our guide.

ACCOMMODATION - COMFORT LODGE

MEALS - BLD

Day 7: Trek to Dhampus (1525m) with great views of the Annapurnas.

This morning we start out trekking through the unspoilt village of Patlekhet. Our walk takes us through sub-tropical forests that include tree orchids, rhododendrons and magnolias. Along the way, we will stop at the village of Pothana where many Tibetan traders live and sell their souvenirs. Once again, we aim to reach our next lodge in time for lunch.

Our accommodation for the night is at the small, but splendid Ker and Downey Basanta Lodge, where we are treated to sweeping views of the entire Annapurna Range. After lunch at the lodge there will be an optional walk through the old village of Dhampus.

ACCOMMODATION - COMFORT LODGE

MEALS – BLD

Day 8: Trek out to the road, return to Pokhara and overnight in a hotel.

After a leisurely breakfast at our lodge, we have a short downhill walk of about an hour and a half along a scenic ridge to the farmland and scattered houses of the broad Yangdi Khola Valley. Here, we meet the road and our waiting vehicle and make the 30-minute transfer to Pokhara. During this transfer, we have the option to stop at the Tibetan refugee camp, which has an interesting temple complex. Arriving in Pokhara, we check in at a luxurious resort hotel. Located on Phewa Tal, one of Nepal's largest lakes, Pokhara is a very laid-back city and its Lakeside district is vibrant with interesting shops cafes and bars, all with the sensational backdrop of the Annapurnas. After lunch the afternoon is free to explore this quite charming town. There is also the option to trek up to the 'Peace stupa' for a birds-eye view over the lake, or to take a boat out onto the water.

ACCOMMODATION - HOTEL WITH SWIMMING POOL

MEALS - BLD

Day 9: Drive to Bandipur, village sightseeing and short trek to the Ker and Downey Three Mountain Lodge (1011m).

We will make a reasonably early start ahead of the 2-hour drive to the traditional Newari village of Bandipur which sits on a high ridge above the Pokhara to Kathmandu highway. When we get there we will take our lunch at the 'Old Inn' and here we will meet a local guide who will show us around the village. Bandipur grew up as a part of the Magar Kingdom of Tanahun and dates back several hundred years. It was once a staging post on a trade route between India and Tibet. With its 18th century architecture and narrow streets, it's a great place to spend a couple of hours. We will then set off on a short trek, which involves an initial descent into a valley where we find a mix of forest and farmland. There are several hamlets and schools along the trail and the final 40 minutes involve a steady climb to our overnight accommodation at the splendid Ker and Downey Three Mountain Lodge. Situated on a ridge at a little over 1000 metres, the lodge command views of three 8000 metres peaks; Dhaulagiri, Annapurna I and Makalu. After checking in, drinks will be served around the central fireplace. Later, dinner will be served in the dining room.

ACCOMMODATION - COMFORT LODGE

MEALS – BLD

Day 10: A day at the Three Mountain Lodge, with optional walks.

We will be woken with a cup of tea or coffee in our rooms. If the mountains are clear, we can sit on our private verandas and enjoy the spectacular views of Dhaulagiri, Annapurna I and Makalu. Then, after breakfast, we will set off on a short walk amongst orange trees to visit 2 local schools. As an alternative, we can walk to a higher viewpoint peak from where the panorama of mountains to the north is even more impressive and we also have views southwards towards Chitwan and the Terai. We will return to the lodge for lunch and then go out with the guide again to visit a couple of local villages, where we may be able to meet retired Gurkhas. This area has been little visited and retains much of its charm. We return to spend a second night at the Three Mountain Lodge.

ACCOMMODATION - COMFORT LODGE

MEALS - BLD

Day 11: Walk back to Bandipur for a final look around before driving to Kathmandu.

After breakfast at this special lodge, we will walk back to Bandipur, where we meet our transport and set off on the 3-hour drive eastwards along the Prithvi Highway to Kathmandu. After checking in at our hotel, there should be a couple of hours to rest and freshen up. Overnight at Gokarna Forest Resort.

ACCOMMODATION - HOTEL WITH SWIMMING POOL

MEAL – BLD

Day 12: A free day in Kathmandu.

One of the attractions of any visit to Nepal is the chance to walk the streets of Kathmandu, which present a fascinating mosaic of shops, cafes and restaurants, food markets and street vendors, as well as a bewildering array of colourful temples and shrines. Kathmandu is a very safe city (provided you watch out for the traffic) and exploring on your own is great fun. This evening we will get together again for a celebratory dinner to mark the end of a most excellent trip.

ACCOMMODATION - HOTEL WITH SWIMMING POOL

MEAL – BLD

Day 13: Departure day. Transfers to Kathmandu Airport are provided.

Transfers to International Airport are provided. For extension trips, please contact our office.

MEAL- B

Holiday Information

Cost per person : US \$ 2620.00 (Minimum 4 pax)
Single Room Supplement : US \$ 660.00

What's Included

- An English-speaking local leader
- Kathmandu Airport transfers
- Internal flights and all land transport involved in the itinerary
- A full day Kathmandu sightseeing with entrance fees and guide
- 4 nights' accommodation in Gokarna Forest Resort on BB Basis / Twin Sharing (Kathmandu)
- 1 night accommodation in Atithi Resort and Spa on BB Basis/ Twin Sharing (Pokhara)
- 7 nights' accommodation in Ker and Downey Resort on FB Basis/ Twin Sharing (On Trek)
- Once on trek the group will be assisted by porters and experienced Sherpa guides (1:5 ratio)

What's Not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Nepalese Visa
- Tips for porters and other trek staff
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc.

Food

Throughout this trip there will be the opportunity to sample local cuisine, but there will always be an option for more familiar international dishes. All the lodges on this trek have first class chefs and food is prepared to the highest quality. In Kathmandu and in Pokhara, the cities' restaurants are internationally known and it is possible to see a restaurant or dish from almost every cuisine in the world.

Meal Plan

All meals are included as per the itinerary.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

All clients travelling to Kathmandu will be met at the airport by your local representative who will arrange the transfer to the group hotel. Our clients **MUST** provide the office with full details of their flights and should let us know if Kathmandu Airport transfers are not required.

Accommodation

While in Kathmandu the group will stay at the only gold course resort, Gokarna Forest Resort, situated a bit away from the crowd and dust of city, which was a former Royal Hunting Palace. The resort provides a touch of history combined with luxury and is an excellent place to relax pre and post trek. While on trek we will stay in Ker and Downey luxury lodges in comfortable twin or double rooms with attached bathroom and hot and cold running water. All these lodges are carefully located to offer spectacular panoramas on the surrounding countryside and also of the Himalayas. While these lodges are vastly superior to standard lodges in the mountains (which generally do not have running hot water and use shared washing rooms and toilets), they are never-the-less remote. All furnishings fittings and equipment have to be carried long distances by porters. You should therefore not expect the standards that can be achieved in luxury accommodation in the city. All accommodation is on a twin sharing basis. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Depending on availability, single rooms can be requested at a supplementary cost. Additional hotel nights in Kathmandu can also be arranged.

Internal Flights

Access to the high and remote areas of the Himalaya where our treks start is often only possible using internal flights. The changeable nature of mountain weather makes flying conditions complex. In addition, the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal does not operate to the same standards as those of western nations and all airlines in Nepal appear on the European Commission's list of airlines that are banned from flying into EU member states. Flying in Nepal is an acknowledged risk, and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice provides further details which you can read on their website at: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/nepal/safety-and-security.

Please note that poor weather can cause delays on internal flights. If at the start of your holiday internal flights are cancelled for the day, you will spend an extra night near the airport and this may be at a hotel other than the group hotel. On the majority of trips there is enough flexibility in the trekking itinerary to make up 1 or possibly 2 lost days, but alternative arrangements must be made if internal flights are cancelled for a subsequent day. For trips that end with an internal flight out of the mountains with no alternative road access, we have included 2 nights in Kathmandu as a contingency against delay. Helicopters can sometimes fly when the scheduled fixed wing aircraft cannot. If your group is offered the opportunity to use a chartered helicopter, either flying up from or back to Kathmandu, the cost will be shared between those choosing to take this option.

In the extremely unlikely event that flight cancellations cause you to miss your homeward international flight, THAMSERKU TREKKING will render all assistance, but cannot be held liable for any extra costs incurred. We advise you to take out suitable insurance and to keep your receipts, as you may subsequently be able to make a claim.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be accompanied by an experienced English-speaking local trek leader, additional Sherpa guides and porters for luggage carrying. The porter can carry 35 kg in total which must be a luggage of 2 members. For any extra weight, we have to hire extra porter which will cost USD 15 per day.

Spending Money

Approximately £250 (or equivalent in US dollars, Euros etc.) changed into local currency, should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses including those itemized below. It is not necessary to obtain local currency prior to departure. Sterling, US Dollars and Euros are equally acceptable for exchange in Nepal. We recommend that you carry your travel money in the form of cash, since you will exchange the majority of this on the day of your arrival in Kathmandu. If you prefer not to carry all of your spending money in cash, it is possible to withdraw money from ATMs in Kathmandu using your debit or credit card. During the trek it is possible to buy snacks, chocolate, soft drinks and beer on most days. Please be aware that since everything has to be carried up, these items become more expensive as you gain altitude.

Guidance On Tipping

Tipping is the accepted way of saying 'thank you' for good service. Tips do not form part of the wages of your guides, porters and trek crew but they are very much appreciated. It is important to remember that tipping is voluntary and should be dependent on good service. Normally the tips are given at the end of the trek and this is best done as a group. Most groups will give the tips with a bit of ceremony (or sometimes a party) on the last evening, to mark the end of the trip. The group should decide together on the level of tipping but as a rough guide, we suggest that a contribution from each group member of around USD 200 - 225 (in rupees) to a tip pool should provide for adequate tips to your local staff. At the end of a trek many people also like to donate various items of their equipment to the porters and trek staff who work so hard to make the trip a success. Boots, gloves, hats, scarves and even socks (clean of course) are always warmly received by the porters. Technical clothing and equipment such as head-torches and trekking poles are highly prized by the Shepa crews. If you think you would like to donate equipment at the end of your trip, your local trip leader will make arrangements for a fair distribution among the trek crew.

Baggage Allowance

Your baggage on trek will be carried by porters or pack animals. The packed weight of your trek bag whilst trekking should be no more than 15kg (33 pounds). It is possible to leave clothes or other items not required on trek at the group hotel.

Altitude

The altitudes on this holiday are not extreme and the maximum altitude attained is no more than the equivalent of a pressurised cabin on an international flight. You may 'feel' the altitude the first time you trek above 2000 metres but all that is required is a slower pace to compensate. You should pay particular attention to your hydration levels while trekking above 2000 metres.

General Information

Passport & Visas

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required. Please check the relevant embassy or consulate for other nationalities. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Visa requirements and charges are subject to change without notice. If you are travelling outside the EU you should have at least 2 blank pages in your passport for each country that you visit.

Transit Via India

If you are travelling via India (Delhi or Calcutta) to your destination you may also require a visa for India. This may apply even if you are not leaving the airport unless your baggage has been checked all the way through to your destination. Generally, if you use the same carrier for both legs of your journey, you will not need an India Visa.

Visa Nepal

All nationalities require a visa. The visa fee is \$25 for 15 days, \$40 for 30 days, \$100 for 90 days and is obtainable on arrival. Payment must be made in cash and USD, GBP or Euros are accepted. You will require 2 passport photos.

Trekking Permits – What Do We Need From You ?

For treks in the Everest region we need your passport details and we need you to take with you to Nepal 2 passport photographs. You will hand these over to your local leader on Day 1.

Health & Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella, along with hepatitis A and typhoid. Malarial prophylaxis is not usually required for trips in the mountains, however if you are visiting rural and remote low lying areas then they might be necessary. On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dentist check up.

Currency

The unit of currency in Nepal is the Nepalese Rupee.

Electricity Supply & Plug

We recommend you check if you require an adaptor for your electrical items at: _

<http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets/>

Preparing For Your Trip

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on a trekking holiday getting some additional exercise. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. Although the trekking on this trip is not difficult or sustained, hiking at altitude is more demanding than similar terrain at lower elevations. We suggest that you adopt a weekly exercise regime leading up to your trip. Regular hiking in hill country is the best training but any regular exercise such as jogging, squash and swimming is also good for developing cardio vascular fitness and stamina. Before coming on the trip we recommend that you make time for some longer walks in hilly country. It is also a good idea to do some reading about the culture of Nepal and of the Sherpa people who live in the Everest region. There are many books on this subject and some are listed below.

Climate

The months of March to May and October to December either side of the summer monsoon season offer the best conditions for trekking. The post-monsoon months usually offer the clearest skies and the most settled weather while spring brings the blooms of the rhododendron at lower elevations. In both seasons you should expect pleasant daytime walking conditions, even getting a little hot around mid-day. Above 3000 metres once the sun goes down (around 5.30 pm) the outside temperature plummets dropping close to or below freezing. The norm in these periods is for clear and settled weather but mountains do produce their own micro-climate and short-lived storms including rain or snow cannot be ruled out.

Books

- Trekking and Climbing in Nepal. Steve Razzetti. New Holland
- Trekking in Nepal. Stephen Bezruchka
- Annapurna, a trekkers guide – Kev Reynolds, Cicerone
- Trekking in the Nepal Himalaya. Stan Armington
- Kathmandu and the Kingdom of Nepal. Prakash Raj
- Insight Guide to Nepal

Maps

Annapurna Adventure Trekking Map - 1:125,000

Nowadays the best maps of Nepal tend to be produced in Nepal. This map is collaboration between the Nepal publishers 'Nepa' and National Geographic. It covers the whole of the Annapurnas plus Pokhara. This is an excellent map, although the scale at 1:125,000 does not provide quite enough detail.

Flight Information

Flight Inclusive Notes

While your domestic flights are pre booked and included with the program, we will be happy to assist you with the international flight booking. The international flight however incurs extra charges and is not included in the price.

Flights SHOULD NOT be booked until you have received your booking confirmation from us.

We hope that this trip notes has answered most of your questions.

Please feel free to contact us and speak to one of our experts.



Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum. The packed weight of your trek bag while trekking should be no more than 15 kgs.

You Must Bring The Following Items:

- Hiking boots
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer shirts
- Casual shirt and/or T-shirts
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Waterproof jacket*
- Sunglasses
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Washbag and toiletries*
- Travel towel
- Antibacterial handwash
- Small padlock (to lock trek bag)
- Small daypack 20 -25 litres*
- Basic First Aid Kit including plasters, blister treatment, aspirin etc.

The Following Items Are Optional:

- Spare laces
- Shorts
- Swimwear (for hotel pools)
- Travel clothes
- Camera
- Pen-knife (remember to pack sharp objects in hold baggage)

Notes

* The following items are provided at the lodges (you are welcome to bring your own if you prefer): A small daypack; rain poncho; trekking pole; 2 water bottles; sun scarf and sun hat; down jacket; wool hat; warm gloves; crocs for use in the lodge; towels; liquid soap; shampoo.

The Nepalese are still traditional and conservative in the way they dress. Therefore to avoid embarrassment on both sides we recommend that you respect this and do not wear revealing clothing or sleeveless tops while visiting Nepal. Shorts are acceptable, but they should reach to just above the knee and be modest and for women it is preferable to wear trousers or a long skirt.