

Annapurna Sanctuary Private Journey

TREK INTO THE HEART OF THE HIMALAYA



WHEN TO GO

Late September to mid-May

For our Private Journey trips, you choose your own group and your preferred dates—there are no set departure dates. Private Journeys are available to groups as few as two people or as large as you like. Contact us for availability, questions, or to book your adventure!



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Annapurna Sanctuary Private Journey

The mountain-ringed amphitheater of the Annapurna Sanctuary is one of the most dramatic settings in the Himalaya, presenting a 360-degree panorama of snow-covered peaks including Annapurna I (26,545') and the sacred “fishtail” spire of Machapuchare (22,943'). Our stunning trek brings you through a dazzling range of landscapes, from terraced rice fields to the bamboo groves and rhododendron forests of Gurung country and right to Annapurna Base Camp, set in a spectacular glacial world of towering peaks. Once inside this breathtaking sanctuary, a special Exploration Day brings you up to high ridges for ever-expanding views that are simply out of this world. Along the way, you'll stay at rustic, yet comfortable, mountain lodges situated in picturesque villages that offer amazing panoramas of the mighty Annapurnas. Please note that you will be sharing a room and/or bathroom during some nights on the trek.

ABOUT PRIVATE JOURNEYS

Wilderness Travel Private Journeys are designed for people who want to travel with their own small private group, but who still want to experience the same superb itinerary design, great accommodations, and signature quality of Wilderness Travel's escorted group trips. These Private Journeys allow you to choose your own dates and your traveling companions—and enjoy the WT touch on all aspects of the journey.



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Itinerary

DAY 1

KATHMANDU, NEPAL (4,600')

Arrive in Kathmandu, where you are met at the airport and transferred to the Hotel Yak and Yeti, a lovely accommodation with a beautiful garden. Set in Durbar Marg, the city center, it offers a tranquil oasis in Kathmandu. The remainder of the afternoon is free for independent sightseeing. Once a traditional medieval city of breathtaking Newari architecture, Kathmandu is now fully grown into a busy urban capital. In the evening, meet with a Wilderness Travel representative at the hotel for a trip orientation and Welcome Dinner...D

DAY 2

KATHMANDU

In the hidden corners of fabled Kathmandu, the ancient past lingers in a maze of narrow streets crowded with turmeric sellers, small golden temples, wandering cows, and traditional workshops. In the morning, you'll explore the Durbar Square area, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with its elaborate architecture, tiny alleyways, and timeless ambiance, and take a rickshaw ride to Thamel, with its crowded streets filled with shops and vendors.

In the afternoon, you discover Kathmandu's extraordinary Buddhist and Hindu temples of Bodhnath and Pashupatinath. Bodhnath is a 1,400-year-old stupa that attracts pilgrims from across Buddhist Asia. Here, pilgrims circle the stupa to make a kora (sacred circuit), turning the stupa's giant prayer wheels as they go. With new monasteries sprouting up all around it, Bodhnath is rapidly becoming a world center of Tibetan Buddhist study. Pashupatinath, with its triple-roofed temple, cremation ghats, and wandering sadhus (holy men), is set along the banks of the sacred Bagmati River, whose waters flow south to join the mighty Ganges, the holy river of India. Pashupatinath is one of four major sites of Shiva worship on the subcontinent. The entrance to the inner temple is for Hindus only, but from the outside, the huge structure of Nandi, the Bull, and a smaller statue of Hanuman, the Monkey God, are in view. Lunch and dinner are on your own, so you can choose from among Kathmandu's wide selection of restaurants and delicious food. Overnight at the Hotel Yak and Yeti...B

DAY 3

POKHARA (3,300') / BIRETHANTI (3,550')

A scenic flight to the town of Pokhara (3,300') offers spectacular panoramas of the mountains you will soon be trekking in. Meeting your trekking guides, drive to the trailhead at Nayapul, where your porters await. Your trek begins with a hike to the village of Birethanti (3,550'), with magnificent views of the spire of 22,943-foot Machapuchare, a sacred mountain locally known as "the fishtail peak" because of its twin summits. After settling into the lodge, you can take a short hike above the village, following the banks of the Bhurundi Khola to a



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 16 days
Arrive: Kathmandu, Nepal
Depart: Kathmandu, Nepal
Lodging: 5 nights hotels, 10 nights locally-owned Nepali lodges
Meals: All meals included except 3 lunches and 4 dinners (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity: Cultural Adventures, Hiking / Trekking
Trip Level: 1 2 3 4 5 6
11-day trek on steep trails, 5-8 hours a day, altitudes between 4,000-13,700 feet

HIGHLIGHTS

- Enjoy one of Nepal's most celebrated treks, with an Exploration Day in a spectacular mountain cirque—and no camping!
- Sublime scenery, from beautiful Gurung villages to the highest peaks of the Annapurnas
- Wilderness Travel's expert Trek Leaders and crew

Itinerary (cont'd)

lovely waterfall where you have the option of swimming beneath the cascading waters. Overnight at lodge...BLD

Driving Time: 2-3 hours

Hiking Details: approximately 1-2 hours, 250' ascent



Mountain Lodges: The lodges we've chosen for this trek are rustic, yet offer excellent mountain views as well as easy access to villages. There will be basic toilet and washing facilities, some with western-style toilets and some with squat-style toilets. Hot water may not be available at every lodge. We provide you with warm sleeping bags with liners, and our crew will be equipped with camping gear should you prefer to camp near the lodges on any given night. Our renowned Wilderness Travel cooking crew will join us, so your meals will be wonderfully varied, with a mix of western and Nepali food, keeping you healthy and well fueled for your hikes, as well as hydrated with plenty of clean, boiled water. Please note on Days 5-10, only dormitory-style accommodations are available at the lodges, meaning that

you will share a room with others. If you do not want to share rooms during these nights, we can send along a tent so you can have a private space to sleep (we will also provide warm sleeping bags, sleeping pad, and liner).

DAY 4

GHANDRUK (6,600')

Views of Annapurna South, Hiunchuli, and Machapuchare begin to emerge as you hike through lush bamboo and rhododendron forests to the large and prosperous Gurung village of Ghandruk, with its slate-roofed houses with a maze of cobbled lanes. It's also the site of the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP). This town is home to many generations of men who served in Britain's legendary Gurkha brigades and some who serve today in the Indian Army's Gurkha regiments as well. Climb a winding stairway that ascends gradually past terraced fields. It's a very scenic path amid lush, green slopes and the valley views are beautiful. This is a full day's hike, and you should arrive in Ghandruk in the afternoon. The trail you will use is away from the main trail in the morning, staying high above the valley and passing little-visited hamlets. Overnight at lodge...BLD

Hiking Details: Approximately 5-6 hours, 2,815' ascent

Gurungs and Gurkhas: There are roughly 450,000 Gurungs in Nepal today, most of whom are engaged in rice and wheat farming and raising sheep. They speak a Tibeto-Burmese language and are ethnically related to the Magars, Thakalis, and Kiratis of eastern Nepal. Many practice a Tibetan Buddhism faith that also has influences of the Hindu religion. The Gurungs were one of the major groups from Nepal recruited into the British Gurkha Regiments. During the Gurkha War (1814-1816) against the British East India Company, the

British were impressed by the bravery and skills of the Gurkhas they fought against. After reaching a stalemate with the Gurkhas, the British were granted the right to hire them as mercenaries and formed Gurkha regiments for the East India Company army. A total of 26 Victoria Crosses, the most honored award for heroism in the line of duty awarded by the British Government, have been won by Gurkhas. Though equipped as any British soldier is, the Gurkhas still carry into battle their traditional weapon, a 16-inch-long curved knife known as a khukuri. Gurkhas serve in the British army today and played a key role in Britain's 1982 Falkland Islands crisis.

DAY 5
CHOMRONG (7,230')

You can visit Ghandruk this morning for a look into village life amid its ancient ochre-washed houses and slate-paved courtyards. Later, head steeply downhill to the Kyumnu Khola, a tributary of the Modi Khola, followed by a climb up to a ridgeline on the west bank of the Modi Khola with a spectacular view of the Matterhorn-like spire of Machapuchare. Continue to Chomrong, the last permanent village below the Annapurna Sanctuary, set at the base of the beautiful peak of Hiunchuli (20,782'). Chomrong is a large Gurung village with wonderful Annapurna views, and all trails into the Annapurna Sanctuary converge here.

Chomrong was one of the first villages in the Annapurna region to have hydroelectric power, courtesy of a Japanese trekker who built a micro hydro plant here in 1982. Later, local villagers, together with the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP), helped to build a new plant large enough to light the entire village. Founded in 1986, ACAP is a model environmental organization that involves the local people in efforts to protect the quality of the environment in the Annapurna region. The project is partly financed by tourism (trekking fees) as well as international institutional donors. ACAP helps maintain the trails and signposts, provides safe drinking water at trailside stations, and monitors the lodges' rates. Tree felling is only allowed when absolutely essential, and the firewood shortage is compensated for by subsidized kerosene stored at depots in strategic villages. Initially the conservation area was only about 77 square miles, mostly around the village of Ghandruk, but now it covers almost 3,000 square miles. ACAP has also set up micro-hydro projects in several villages. The Annapurna Conservation Area Project has won many awards, including the World Wildlife Fund's J Paul Getty prize in 1992. Overnight at lodge...

BLD
Hiking Details: Approximately 6-7 hours, 755' ascent



Itinerary (cont'd)



DAY 6

DOBHAN (8,350')

As you pass through the ever-narrowing gorge of the Modi Khola, hike through rhododendron forest festooned with ferns and moss and reach Kuldi Ghar, a small settlement perched on the steep-sided valley. Descend across rock slabs into a dense bamboo forest, often hiking over a tangle of roots and fallen bamboo that can be slippery. Machapuchare can occasionally be glimpsed between the trees. Overnight at lodge...BLD

Hiking Details: Approximately 6-7 hours, 1,230' ascent

DAY 7

SANCTUARY "GATES" / MACHAPUCHARE BASE CAMP (12,150')

Following an undulating trail, climb gradually, but steadily, until you emerge into the open spaces above treeline. The scenery becomes more alpine as you hike across a grassy pasture at Tomo (8,400'), reaching the narrowest point in the canyon, the natural "gate" to the sanctuary, with its small Hindu shrine at Panchenin Barha. The gorge widens now and the forest thins out as you climb toward the overhanging rock called Hinko Cave (10,400'), and finally feast your eyes upon the full glory of the Annapurna Sanctuary.

Ahead of you lies the lateral moraine of South Annapurna Glacier, with the Modi Khola flowing to your right. The trail becomes more rugged and boulder-strewn, and the vegetation is mostly grass and low scrub. Cross a bridge over a tributary stream of the Modi Khola, where a steep flight of steps leads to Machapuchare Base Camp (12,150'), site of a 1957 British Expedition to Machapuchare that climbed to within 200 feet of the summit. Because the peak is sacred to the Gurung people as the abode of Shiva, Nepal's government subsequently declared it off limits to climbers and it has remained unclimbed ever since. From the lodge, you have an incredible view of the red-rock west face of Machapuchare, which often glows with the light of the setting sun long after dusk. Overnight at lodge...BLD

Hiking Details: Approximately 5-6 hours, 3,800' ascent

DAYS 8-9

EXPLORATION DAYS / ANNAPURNA SANCTUARY (13,000') / ANNAPURNA SOUTH HIGH CAMP (14,245')

A glorious morning hike brings you into the heart of the Annapurna Sanctuary, where the famous base camp for Annapurna's South Face is located. You have this afternoon and tomorrow to appreciate the snowy summits of the Sanctuary. In this extraordinary mountain cirque ringed by Hiunchuli, Annapurna South, Fang, Annapurna II, Roc Noir, Glacier Dome, Gangapurna, Annapurna III, and Machapuchare, the views in any direction are indescribably beautiful and ever-changing. The sunset paints the summits pink—and the sight of alpenglow on Machapuchare is amazing.

Your hikes on these days can bring you up to the Sanctuary's high ridges for impressive views. You also have a chance to reflect on the monuments to fallen

climbers, including Anatoli Boukrev, the famous Russian climber who was one of the heroic rescuers during the tragic 1996 Everest climb chronicled in the best-selling *Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer (Boukrev died the next year while attempting a winter climb of Annapurna's South Face). You can view the climbing route used by Chris Bonington, who led the successful British ascent of Annapurna I in 1970, considered at that time to be the most difficult technical climb yet attempted in the Himalaya. Overnight at lodge...BLD each day

Hiking Details: Approximately 2-3 hours, 1,610' ascent (Day 8); 2 hours, 485' ascent (Day 9)

DAY 10

DHOBAN (8,500')

After taking in your last spectacular views of the Annapurna Sanctuary, head out the "gate" and begin our long descent through the deep gorge of the Modi Khola valley, lush with bamboo and rhododendron forests. Overnight at lodge...BLD

BLD

Hiking Details: Approximately 6-7 hours, 5,260' descent

DAY 11

JHINUDANDA (5,840')

You can enjoy more great Annapurna panoramas as you descend through the village of Jhinudanda to the Modi Khola. Overnight at lodge...BLD

Hiking Details: Approximately 6-7 hours, 2,660' descent

DAY 12

POTHANA (5,900') / LANDRUNG (5,470')

Hiking over a small pass to Pothana, where many Tibetan traders live, you make a short climb up to the village of Landrung, traversing through cultivated fields before you ascend through rhododendron forests onto a ridge descending from Machapuchare. Overnight at lodge...BLD

Hiking Details: Approximately 6-7 hours, 60' ascent

DAY 13

PHEDI / POKHARA

Walk down to the roadhead near Phedi, bid farewell to your trekking staff, and continue by road to the Pokhara Valley, arriving in time for lunch at the lovely Shangri La Village Resort. With its landscaped gardens, swimming pool, and stunning views of the Annapurnas, this is the perfect place to relax after our trek. This afternoon, there is a chance to visit the lakeside bazaar, with its shops and restaurants, or row a boat on the lake. Dinner is on your own so you can enjoy a restaurant in town or at the resort. Overnight at the Shangri-La Village Resort...BL

Driving Time: 1.5 hours

Hiking Details: Approximately 3 hours, 3,200' descent



Itinerary (cont'd)



DAY 14 KATHMANDU

Fly back to Kathmandu, with arrival time dependent on weather conditions, and transfer to the hotel. The remainder of the day is free. Lunch and dinner are on your own. Overnight at the Hotel Yak and Yeti...B

DAY 15 KATHMANDU

Today is free for independent exploration of Kathmandu, from the bustling lanes of Thamel to the carved wooden temples of this traditional capital. Our local representatives can help organize extra excursions during this exploration day (at additional cost, which you can pay directly in Kathmandu). We recommend a visit to Bhaktapur, a fantastic medieval city located outside of Kathmandu and a showcase for the genius of the 17th century Newari artists. Its gem, Durbar Square, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that is filled with intricate palaces and monasteries. A trip to Swayambu is also highly recommended, as this ancient Buddhist stupa has phenomenal views of the Kathmandu Valley. Swayambu was established as a shrine around 500 BC. By the 13th century AD, it had become an important center of Buddhist learning. Its eyes, painted on four cardinal points, keep watch over the Kathmandu Valley. A steep climb of 300 steps leads you to this remarkable place of worship. Lunch and dinner are on your own. Overnight at the Hotel Yak and Yeti...B

DAY 16 DEPART

Transfer to the airport for departure on homeward-bound flights...B



Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024

\$4795 (6-10 members)

\$5595 (3-5 members)

\$5995 (2 members)

Single supplement: \$695

Internal airfare: \$295 (subject to change)

Make it Your Trip!

The prices above are for the ready-to-book adventure outlined in this Detailed Itinerary, a popular option that has been handcrafted by our Area Specialists to include the best of every destination. While many travelers choose to book this tour as is, our Area Specialists are also happy to work with you to customize this Private Journey to suit your specific interests and style of travel. We can arrange for longer or shorter stays, or add an extension to additional places of interest. We can even add special activities or customize excursions depending on your interests. We invite you to contact us to discuss your options!

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Accommodations as noted
- All meals included except 3 lunches and 4 dinners as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Guide and porters on trek
- Trekking permits and national park fees
- Airport transfers as noted

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, internal flights, airport departure taxes, additional costs over and above the cost of the scheduled Pokhara/Kathmandu flight if alternative transportation is necessary due to flight delays, hotels en route to or from Kathmandu, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, optional tipping or gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights that may be necessary due to airline schedule changes or other factors, pre-trip expenses of medical immunizations (if any), travel insurance, or passports and visas; and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.). Tipping the trek crew is customary but entirely at your discretion.

SIGNING UP FOR A TRIP

Early reservations are recommended since accommodations often sell out far in advance. Please call 1-800-368-2794 and ask for our Asia Manager or email us at asia@wildernesstravel.com with any questions that you may have about this trip. To reserve your Private Journey, we will need to know your preferred dates of travel. We will then check availability and send you a proposed itinerary with exact pricing for your adventure. We can typically hold a provisional booking for one week. At that time, we must collect your initial deposit or accommodations will be released. We accept Visa, Mastercard, or American Express card. Upon receipt of your deposit, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a letter of confirmation, Detailed Itinerary, Trip Application, Medical Form, and Pre-Departure Information Booklet with information to help you prepare for your adventure. Please see our Cancellations and Transfer Fee Schedule for specific payment information.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$1000

90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Minimum fee: \$500 per person

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

*Please note that this differs from our regular catalog departures.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

Extend Your Adventure!



To help you make the most of your adventure, we've created several exciting trip extensions. For detailed information, including full itineraries and complete pricing, please visit our webpage and click on "Extend Your Trip": www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/nepal/annapurna-sanctuary-private-journey/extensions

BANGKOK EXTENSION

Discover the wealth of beautiful cultural monuments of Bangkok, one of Asia's most exciting cities. With a private guide, journey by private longtail boat through the winding klongs (waterways) of the Chao Phraya River, then spend the day visiting the city's ornate and beautiful sites, including Wat Arun, Bangkok's most well-known landmark, the dazzling Grand Palace, the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, the enormous gold-plated Reclining Buddha, and the vibrant market at Pak Klong Talad, where a vast variety of orchids and colorful flowers are sold.

3 days. From \$895.



KANHA NATIONAL PARK EXTENSION

Kanha is one of the Indian subcontinent's greatest wildlife reserves and a great place in India to see the Royal Bengal tiger. Besides tigers, there are more than 200 species of birds and some 22 species of mammals in residence here. On guided excursions, explore by jeep through the park's bamboo thickets, dadar (plateau grasslands) and sal forests, which gave birth to Rudyard Kipling's classic *The Jungle Book*. Overnights are at the Baagh Resort, a comfortable jungle-surrounded retreat adjacent to the edge of the park, or the Taj Banjaar Tola (deluxe option), an elegant tented camp on the banks of the Banjaar River overlooking Kanha.

5 days. From \$2395.



THARU LODGE EXTENSION

Adjacent to Chitwan National Park in Nepal's southern Terai zone, Tharu Lodge offers the perfect blend of a quiet wilderness retreat fused with local cultural encounters. Built in the longhouse style of Tharu architecture, the lodge is nestled into lush forest overlooking idyllic Terai landscapes. Dine al fresco under the shade of a mango tree, take a refreshing dip in Tharu's pool, play a spot of tennis, watch elephants, or stretch your legs on a jungle walk. We offer a 2-night, 3-day extension or a 3-night, 4-day extension (call for details).

3 days. From \$995.

Arrival & Departure

A list of required documents (passport, visas, etc.) will be sent you in the Welcome Packet that is sent to you directly upon confirming your reservation for the trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before booking air arrangements.

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Hotel Yak and Yeti
Kathmandu, Nepal

Suggested Airport: Tribhuvan Int'l Airport (KTM)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, by 3:00 pm

Meeting Place: A Wilderness Travel representative will meet you outside the customs area and will be holding a Wilderness Travel sign or a sign with your name on it.

A complimentary transfer is provided from Tribhuvan Int'l Airport to the Hotel Yak & Yeti.

An orientation meeting and Welcome Dinner will take place in the evening of Day 1. Please note that check-in at the hotel begins at 2:00 pm.

DEPARTURE

Kathmandu, Nepal

Suggested Airport: Tribhuvan Int'l Airport (KTM)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 16, anytime

A complimentary transfer will be provided from the Hotel Yak & Yeti to Tribhuvan Int'l Airport. Please note that check-out from the hotel is 12:00 noon.

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Kathmandu. Most trip members fly to Kathmandu via Bangkok, Hong Kong, Singapore, or the Middle East. A forced overnight is normally required en route.

Warning: We highly recommend you **not** book any flight schedules with Nepal Airlines. Although they are operational, they have a history of last minute schedule changes and flight cancellations.

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or

1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it may be necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary, with a forced overnight required en route or upon return (all extra hotel nights en route or return are at your own expense). The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule so we can reserve your airport transfers. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for the trip.

INTERNAL FLIGHTS

The tickets for your internal flights (Kathmandu/Pokhara/Kathmandu) are issued by our local agents in Nepal and are given to you in Kathmandu with exact flight times and information. Weather, overbooking, and other factors beyond our control often result in a trekking group not being able to depart from or return to Kathmandu on the planned day. We cannot guarantee available seats on the scheduled day, even with confirmed reservations. Wilderness Travel has, however, excellent contacts in both Kathmandu and Pokhara to assist our groups should delays occur.

In the event of a delay on the return from Pokhara to Kathmandu, we will continue to provide food and lodging in Pokhara until the group's departure. However, the trip does officially end on the stated ending date. Regardless of flight delays, trip members remaining in Nepal beyond this date must do so at their own expense.

In the event of non-availability or cancellation of the scheduled flight, the group may vote to charter a helicopter to fly to Pokhara or return to Kathmandu. Any additional expense over and above the cost of the scheduled flight—including the cost of a possible vehicle transfer, helicopter charter, and/or equipment transfers—must be paid by members directly to our agent in Kathmandu.

Accommodations

DAYS 1 TO 2 AND DAYS 14 TO 15 (4 NIGHTS): KATHMANDU, NEPAL



HOTEL YAK AND YETI

Perfectly located in the heart of Kathmandu yet on a quiet street, the Yak and Yeti is a combination of old and new. Its restaurants and conference rooms are in a restored century-old Rana palace, a showcase of the era's opulence. The hotel's newer wings blend with the old palace, offering guest rooms with a high degree of comfort and traditional Nepali decor. The hotel's gardens, complete with swimming pool, walking trail, and temple dedicated to the goddess Kumari, make it a relaxing hideaway from the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu.

DAYS 3 TO 12 (10 NIGHTS): ANNAPURNA FOOTHILLS AND SANCTUARY, NEPAL



ANNAPURNA LODGES

The lodges we've chosen for this trek are rustic, yet offer excellent mountain views as well as easy access to villages. There will be basic toilet and washing facilities, some with western-style toilets and some with squat-style toilets. Hot water may not be available at every lodge. We provide you with warm sleeping bags with liners, and our crew will be equipped with camping gear should you prefer to camp near the lodges on any given night. Our renowned Wilderness Travel cooking crew will join us, so your meals will be wonderfully varied, with a mix of western and Nepali food, keeping you healthy and well fueled for your hikes, as well as hydrated with plenty of clean, boiled water. Please note on Days 5-10, only dormitory-style accommodations are available at the lodges, meaning that you will share a room with others. If you do not want to share rooms during these nights, we can send along a tent so you can have a private space to sleep (we will also provide warm sleeping bags, sleeping pad, and liner).

DAY 13 (1 NIGHT): POKHARA, NEPAL



SHANGRI-LA VILLAGE RESORT

The Shangri-La Village Resort is a haven of tranquility, with its spacious landscaped gardens, swimming pool, and panoramic views from every room. The guest rooms are clean and comfortable, with all the modern amenities, and the common areas, filled with interesting local décor, are lit by flickering butter lamps. Amenities include a sauna and health spa. And don't miss watching the sun rise on the Annapurnas—absolutely stunning!

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Annapurna Sanctuary Private Journey* webpage and click on the "Accommodations" tab.

Trip Details

TRIP LEVEL

This trip is Level 5+, Strenuous, according to our trip rating system. We have 11 hiking days, with hikes of 6-8 hours a day on moderate to steep trails. Most of the hiking is between 5,000 and 13,000 feet, and our highest overnight is at about 13,000 feet. On trek, there are steep ascents and descents (often 2,000 to 3,000 feet in elevation gain or loss per day), including sections of steep, stone staircases.

There are dangers inherent in any expedition traveling to remote wilderness regions, especially when they involve travel to high altitude. These dangers include everything from rock falls to the possibility of a serious fall, accident, or sickness without access to means of rapid evacuation, availability of medical supplies, or adequate medical attention once provided. Our Trek Leaders and support crew are experienced veterans of the Nepal Himalaya, but it takes cooperation and flexibility from each participant to ensure a successful trek.

GETTING IN SHAPE

Every participant must understand that this trek is truly challenging—you should be in excellent physical condition. Even though trip members carry only a daypack (with camera, jacket, rain gear, water bottle, and other small necessities you may need during the day), we recommend you make a special effort to get in top physical shape for the trip by hiking, running, swimming, bicycling, or engaging in other forms of aerobic exercise well beyond your normal routine. Many activities get heart and lungs into shape, but the most effective way of getting fit for hiking is to hike! Walking up and down flights of stairs is also an effective way to train for the steep ascents and descents in the Himalaya. Bending your knees as you go down stairs will help strengthen your quad muscles. At least two months prior to your trek, we urge you to go on weekend day hikes that involve long uphill and downhill walking.

For this trek, we require your doctor sign the Wilderness Travel Medical Form. Once Wilderness Travel has confirmed your place on the trip roster, no refunds beyond our standard fees will be made if your physician refuses to sign the form. It is very important that you and your physician fully agree that you are physically capable of undertaking a strenuous trek, and equally important that you undertake proper conditioning prior to the trek.

The Trek Leader has the right to disqualify any member from the trip at any time if it is medically necessary, to avoid endangering the group, or if the participant in question is physically unfit for the rigors of the trip. Refunds are not given under such circumstances.

TREK LEADER

Our trek is led by an experienced English-speaking Sirdar (leader), who is ably assisted by a team of assistants and a trail crew. He and his team have a deep connection with the Himalayas and are wonderful trailside companions, hiking with you throughout each day on the trail, providing good company, and making sure that you are comfortable and hiking at a pace that suits you.

A TYPICAL TREKKING DAY

Hiking distances on trek are normally measured in hours, not miles, since maps aren't really accurate enough to assess how far we walk up and down winding mountain trails. On a typical trek day, wake-up is around 7:00 am. After packing up our duffels and having breakfast, we set off on the trail while the porters or pack animals shoulder their loads. The crew usually passes us by midmorning to get ahead and prepare our lunch. We ask you not to hike ahead of the leader because trails are often not well-marked.

We typically walk for three to four hours in the morning, then stop for a leisurely lunch of an hour or more at a scenic spot on the trail. After lunch, we walk for another three hours or so until we reach our next night's lodging. Upon arrival, we have late afternoon tea and a snack. On our exploration days we occasionally have more time in the morning or afternoon for rest or further individual exploration. Temperatures drop quickly as the sun falls behind the peaks, and it's easy to get chilled after exerting yourself for several hours, so have an extra layer of clothing ready. Dinner is served to us in the lodge, and afterwards, we usually chat away the evening or read until bedtime.

MEALS ON TREK

Our own experienced cook crew is part of the Wilderness Travel trekking staff, and all our meals will be prepared by them. Our cooks are trained and offer a good variety of hygienically prepared meals. Our drinking water is always boiled and treated washing water is put out before every meal so you can wash your hands before eating. Meals are a blend of Nepalese and Western dishes. Breakfast is

Trip Details (cont'd)

normally a light meal of porridge or granola, with hot milk, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, biscuits, or cookies. Lunches may include potatoes, eggs, curried vegetables, cheese, local-style breads, fruit, tea, hot chocolate or a fruit drink. Dinner is typically soup and a main course such as a noodle dish, or meat or vegetable stew, depending on what is available in local villages. Dessert on trek is usually canned or fresh fruit. If you are partial to special treats (licorice, candy bars, trail mix, and so on), please bring your own supply with you for the trek. A variety of sweets, nuts, and dried fruit can be purchased in Kathmandu.

WEATHER

The popular trekking seasons are fall and spring. Nepal lies at the same latitude as Florida, but altitude is the main factor governing temperatures. In the semitropical lowlands of Kathmandu (altitude 4,000 feet), daytime temperatures can be quite warm, in the 70Fs and 80Fs, with cool, misty nights. In the Annapurna foothills, temperatures tend to be quite cool in the mornings and evenings (50Fs-60Fs), but heat up at mid-day due to the strong direct sunlight at altitudes over 5,000 feet. It rarely snows below 7,000 feet.

At altitudes of 8,000 to 10,000 feet, daytime temperatures can be in the 50Fs and 60Fs for fall trips and 60Fs and 70Fs for spring trips. Nights are cool to cold, often in the 40Fs. Skies are generally clear, although the spring has more precipitation (but Nepal's famous rhododendron forests are in full bloom in the spring). Clouds often form in the afternoons, disappearing at night to reveal brilliantly starry skies.

At altitudes over 10,000 feet, weather is unpredictable and the wind chill factor comes into play. Daytime temperatures at these heights can be in the 60Fs, but also as low as the 30s and 40s, especially if it is windy. Temperatures drop very quickly when the sun goes down, and evening/nighttime temperatures at high altitudes often drop to around 15F and sometimes lower. Snow is not uncommon at higher elevations.

PRIVATE JOURNEY GUIDED SERVICES

In Kathmandu, local representatives will provide your transfers and join you for a Welcome Dinner as noted in the itinerary. You will have a local private guide and driver for the sightseeing tours in Kathmandu, and a separate experienced trekking guide with you throughout your trek, Days 3-13.

A HELPING HAND

Wilderness Travel strongly supports the concept of responsible tourism, and encourages all of our groups to be sensitive to their role in the changing, fragile environment of the Himalaya. We also believe it is our responsibility to give something back to the people who so hospitably welcome us into their villages and monasteries. As part of this effort, we are pleased to support 50% of the annual operating budget of the Namche Dental Clinic, a project of the American Himalayan Foundation. This is one of the first dental clinics in rural Nepal, and the only one serving the Sherpa population of the Khumbu area, which has been impacted by tourism and modernization, resulting in changing diets and increased dental problems. The clinic is locally run and managed by Sherpa dental therapists who were trained in Canada, and offers basic dental care as well as an outreach program to teach school children how to care for their teeth. Members of our Everest-area treks have the opportunity to visit the clinic while staying in Namche Bazaar; ask your Trek Leader if you are interested. We also support the efforts of the American Himalayan Foundation throughout the Himalayan region.

BEING A CONSIDERATE TRAVELER

Please show respect for the cultures we are visiting by observing local customs concerning appropriate dress, particularly in sacred places. Your Trip Leader is always available to answer any questions that you may have regarding this. If it is necessary to use a cell phone during the trip, please do so privately. Smoking is rarely an issue these days, but if you do smoke, please do so only away from the group.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Asia Manager or email us at asia@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

ABOUT PRIVATE JOURNEYS

Wilderness Travel Private Journeys are designed for people who want to travel with their own small private group, but who still want to experience the same superb itinerary design, great accommodations, and signature quality of Wilderness Travel's escorted group trips. These Private Journeys allow you to choose your own dates and your traveling companions—and enjoy the WT touch on all aspects of the journey.

TOUCAN CLUB

Please note that Toucan Club discounts do not apply for our Private Journeys. However, your participation on these trips will count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel's regular expeditions. For more information regarding our Toucan Club bonus program, please visit our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/resources/toucan-club.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 2021, 10-time winner

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Conde Nast Traveller*, 2021 & 2020

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*, 2020

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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