

## NEPAL –Annapurna Circuit



### **TREK OVERVIEW**

The Annapurna Circuit trek is one of Nepal's finest mountain walks and a classic Himalayan adventure. It provides a combination of spectacular high mountain scenery, picturesque lowland farms and villages, great culture and a high pass. After a sightseeing day in Kathmandu we head to Besisahar, the starting point for this superb route that takes you through the mysterious and lovely Marsyangdi valley with its fertile green terraces and long distance views. We trek over the famous Thorong La at 5416m our highest point and descend into the mighty Kali Gandaki valley where the old caravan route squeezes its way between Dhaulagiri and Annapurna, both 8000m giants. Throughout you will be rewarded with spectacular and varied scenery, a must do trek!

### **Participation Statement**

Adventure Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

### **Adventure Travel – Accuracy of Itinerary**

Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops and the duration of the day may vary from those outlined. You should be aware that some events are beyond our control and we would ask for your patience.

## PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE/FITNESS

If you are used to regular multi-day hill walking you will have the right level of fitness to fully enjoy your time on this trek. Previous walking experience is not essential but will help you get the most out of this trip. Non hill walkers must come with a reasonable degree of fitness. Most days involve 6 - 8 hours walking plus plenty of rest stops.



## GROUP AND LEADERS

A fully qualified UK leader will accompany all groups of six or more passengers. He/she will be assisted by an experienced Nepali leader. Smaller or private groups will be led by an English speaking Nepali guide. This trip is exclusive to Adventure Peaks.

## WEATHER

The weather should be pleasant during the day with cooler evenings and nights. Nepal is mostly dry from late September to May (the trekking season) and is coldest from December to February. This trek starts at a low altitude so you can expect the first few days to be quite hot. The higher you are the cooler it will be. In spring afternoon cloud tends to build up in the afternoon and can obscure the views. Walkers should realize however that weather in the high mountains is unpredictable and should be prepared for this

## WHAT TO CARRY

This trek is fully supported by a team of porters who will transport your main baggage. You will only need to carry a light daypack at the very most. A 35l rucksack is a useful size to comfortably fit in essential items such as water bottle, camera, wet-weather gear and extra layers etc.

## CATERING ARRANGEMENTS

In the morning you can enjoy an early hearty breakfast of cereal, porridge, eggs and toast so you are fuelled up and ready to leave the teahouse whilst it's still fairly cool. Lunch is usually in a teahouse by the side of the trail or a picnic if there are no suitable places to eat. On arriving at your overnight teahouse you will be ready for a well-earned cup of tea and biscuits - this leaves an hour or so to either rest or explore before a fine three course evening meal. Please remember that as the lodges like to source most of their supplies locally, the evening menus may appear repetitive. For pure good, hearty energy giving food you cannot beat the Nepalese staple, DalBhat, but most establishments will also offer choices of westernised food. There are plenty of opportunities to supplement your

diet by buying snacks and drinks from the shops you pass along the way.

## ACCOMMODATION

In Kathmandu you will stay in a 3\* hotel in rooms with private facilities. Twin, double or single rooms are available. On trek we utilise Nepalese trekking lodges (teahouses) which are locally owned and run fairly basic establishments providing good food, accommodation with 3-4 beds arranged in dormitories (doubles sometimes available, please request). You will need a sleeping mat and sleeping bag. There is a central dining/sitting room where food and drinks are served. Toilet facilities are usually outside. Despite the basic facilities, it is a great experience to share the company of local families who will often entertain with local songs and dance!

## ROAD BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT

In recent years this area has seen a lot of development. Roads (4x4 tracks mostly) are still being built in the Marsyandi valley and in the Kali Gandaki valley Jomsom is reachable by road. We are aware that for some roads spoil the remoteness and we will avoid walking along them as far as possible. However they bring benefits to local communities and trekkers, and the superb mountain views seen from this classic trek are unchanged. Electricity is more common now, increasing the comfort offered by local entrepreneurs.

## LANGUAGE AND TIME

**Language:** Nepali is the official language but English is the 'commercial' language and is widely spoken.

**Time:** GMT+5hr45min (CET). No daylight saving time at present.

## HEALTH

All our UK leaders hold first aid certificates and carry a fully equipped first aid kit for medical emergencies. However you should bring your own supplies of plasters, blister prevention pads (Compeed), Paracetamol etc. and any medication you are taking. There are no compulsory vaccinations for Nepal but the following are usually recommended: TB, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Polio, Typhoid and possibly Rabies. Malarial prophylaxis is only required if you are visiting the lowland region on an extension to Chitwan National Park. Consult your GP or a vaccine specialist for professional advice or refer to this website: [www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk). Tap or stream water should never be drunk without first sterilizing with chlorine dioxide tablets or by boiling.

## INSURANCE

Insurance which covers mountain rescue, evacuation and medical expenses is **essential**. You should note there are no official mountain rescue services in Nepal and that any evacuation in the event of a serious medical emergency to the nearest hospital will be by land or military helicopter. We will require a copy of your insurance prior to departure. Please also ensure your insurance covers you for walking above 4000m (some will exclude this option).

## ALTITUDE

If you are new to altitude you may have concerns about the effects. Don't worry because our itineraries allow sufficient time to acclimatise, and altitude rarely causes anyone any problems on this trip. The best way to avoid

such symptoms is to walk at a gentle steady pace and drink plenty of fluid.

### USEFUL TIPS

Just in case your main luggage goes missing en route, it is a good idea to wear your boots on the plane. Most other things can be replaced but comfortable, well worn-in boots cannot. Pack important items in strong plastic bags.



### EQUIPMENT

A detailed equipment list is provided on booking but normal winter walking equipment is all that is required, together with a three to four season sleeping bag which can be hired from us. For equipment purchases Adventure Peaks offers a 15% discount off the RRP from their shop in Ambleside or online.

### BAGGAGE

For your own comfort travel light. Normally airlines restrict baggage to 20kg (the Pokhara flight is also a 20kg Hold limit plus 5kg hand baggage), and on trek the weight for porters should be kept to 15kg, (you will be wearing boots and one set of trekking clothes). Some items can be left at the hotel in Kathmandu for your return.

### VISAS AND PERMITS

UK citizens and most EU nationals can purchase Visas on arrival. You will need the payment of US\$40 ready in cash and two passport sized photographs. All other countries should check with their local embassy. Passports must be valid for at least six months after the end date of the trip.

### EXTENSIONS

- **Everest Panoramic Flight** (from Kathmandu).
- **Chitwan Safari** (+ 4 or 5 days)

*FOR PRICES AND MORE DETAILS PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT OUR OFFICE*

### LOCAL COSTS

All accommodation on the itinerary and most meals are included; please see the itinerary page for full details. Additional costs would include any drinks or snacks outside of meal times and personal spending.

You would be responsible for any extra night's accommodation or costs (including fees for changes to International flights), due to you finishing the trip early or to unavoidable delays. All additional payments would need to be paid for whilst in Nepal (card payments accepted).

### CURRENCY

The currency in Nepal is the Rupee (NPR) but you cannot get rupees outside of Nepal - therefore take UK sterling or US\$ and exchange on arrival in Kathmandu. Don't try and change money in the street in Nepal as it is illegal. ATMs and change bureaux are available in the arrivals hall at the airport and in Kathmandu. It is best to change all the money you need in Kathmandu. There are facilities in Pokhara, but these should not be relied on.

### TIPPING

Tipping is an accepted part of life in Nepal. We generally tip our local staff as a whole, please see the Nepal Background Information sheet in your Welcome Pack for more information. Tipping at meals and in hotels is normal practice.

### ADVENTURE PEAKS KITBAG

All Adventure Peaks clients who reside in the UK will receive a **FREE** kitbag for any treks outside the UK. The bag will be posted to you approx. 3 weeks prior to your departure. If you have travelled with us before and already have an Adventure Peaks kitbag, or reside outside the UK, we will send an alternative gift.

### FLIGHTS AND JOINING ARRANGEMENTS

Flights are NOT included as part of this holiday. (Our itinerary assumes you take an overnight flight in each direction. If a daytime flight is taken on the return, you will arrive home on day 22). Adventure Peaks would be delighted to arrange your flights for you. The earlier you book, the better price we can obtain for flights. The cost of flights will be quoted to you separately and will vary with departure and booking date. There are a lot of airlines which fly from the UK to Kathmandu, and we are able to obtain preferential rates with some of these. Whatever flight you take, you will be met at the airport and transferred to the hotel in Kathmandu.

**The rendezvous for this trip is the ARRIVALS HALL AT KATHMANDU AIRPORT when your flight comes in on Day 2.**

**PLEASE ENSURE YOU DO NOT PURCHASE YOUR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL (FLIGHTS OR OTHER) UNTIL WE HAVE GUARANTEED YOUR TRIP IS RUNNING.**

## ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT ITINERARY

No	Day, date	Today we...	We stay at...	Accommodation...	Meals...
1	Sat	Fly	Plane	Plane	
2	Sun	Arrive Kathmandu	Kathmandu	Hotel	
3	Mon	Sightseeing	Kathmandu	Hotel	B
4	Tue	Transfer	Besisahar (823m)	Tea House	BLD
5	Wed	Trek 1	Bahundanda (1310m)	Tea House	BLD
6	Thu	Trek 2	Chyamje (1400m)	Tea House	BLD
7	Fri	Trek 3	Bagarchhap (2160m)	Tea House	BLD
8	Sat	Trek 4	Chame (2685m)	Tea House	BLD
9	Sun	Trek 5	Pisang (3185m)	Tea House	BLD
10	Mon	Trek 6	Manang (3535m)	Tea House	BLD
11	Tue	Trek 7	Manang (3535m)	Tea House	BLD
12	Wed	Trek 8	Phedi (4420m)	Tea House	BLD
13	Thu	Trek 9	Muktinath (3792m)	Tea House	BLD
14	Fri	Trek 10	Jomson (2743m)	Tea House	BLD
15	Sat	Trek 11	Ghasa (2010m)	Tea House	BLD
16	Sun	Trek 12	Tatopani (1190m)	Tea House	BLD
17	Mon	Trek 13	Tatopani (1190m)	Tea House	BLD
18	Tue	Trek 14	Ghoropani (2853m)	Tea House	BLD
19	Wed	Trek 15	Birethanti (1050m)	Tea House	BLD
20	Thu	Trek 16	Pokhara (900m)	Hotel	BLD
21	Fri	Transfer	Kathmandu	Hotel	B
22	Sat	Depart Kathmandu	Plane	Plane	B
23	Sun	Arrive home	Home	Own bed!	

**Days 1 to 2** Depart UK, and arrive Kathmandu usually early evening the next day. Transfer to hotel close to the famous, bustling Thamel district of Kathmandu within easy walking distance of the Monkey Temple with its lovely gardens.

**Day 3** Morning briefing, after which the rest of the day is free for you to enjoy the wonders of Kathmandu. Sightseeing tours can be arranged.

**Day 4** Drive to the road head at Besisahar (also known as Lamjung) stopping for lunch on route. Time to relax and enjoy the rest of the day whilst final preparations are made with the porters.

**Days 5 to 7** Following and criss-crossing the Marsyandi river, we enter the Annapurna Conservation Area, climb from tropical forests to mountain forests, enjoy ever improving views of the mountains as we get closer and closer to them and pass through numerous interesting villages seeing the culture change as we ascend. *6 to 7 hours walking each day.*

**Days 8/9** Now in the Tibetan Manang District we continue our trek through forests with views of Manaslu and Annapurna II. We overnight at the administrative capital, Chame (2685m), and continue on up to Pisang (3185m). *5 hours walking each day.*

**Days 10/11** Above Pisang we are treated with magnificent views of Tilicho Peak, Annapurna II and IV, Gangapurna and Glacier Dome. We reach the settlement of Braga and continue to Manang (3535m). *5 to 6 hours walking.*

Here we stop for an acclimatisation day when we can take short walks to viewpoints and enjoy the local culture and food whilst taking a well-deserved break from the trail.

**Day 12** A reasonably long and tiring day. We soon reach the village of Tengri (3660m) and enter the Jarsangkhola valley. Passing through Gunsang, a series of pastures lead to Leder (4250m) where we continue up to reach the plateau of Phedi (4420m) at the foot of the Thorung La. *5 hours walking.*

**Day 13** The hardest and most spectacular part of the trek. The trail ascends steadily, passing a number of glacial lakes on the way to the chortens of Thorung La (5416m) which boasts magnificent views to Gangapurna and Dhaulagiri. The steep,

possibly snow covered descent takes around three hours and provides stunning views of Dhaulagiri I, Tukucho Peak and Nilgiri. Muktinath (3792m) hosts the sanctuary of Juwala Mapa (Temple of Miraculous Flame) a 'must see'. *9+ hours walking.*

**Day 14** We continue our descent until we reach the ancient village of Kagbeni (2810m) with houses of pounded earth stacked against each other, and the ruins of Sakyapa Monastery. A long, level path leads to Jomsom (2743m), the administrative capital of the Kali Gandaki Valley. *5 hours walking.*

**Day 15** Our trail today takes in some of the most stunning scenery in the Kali Gandaki Valley. There are superb views of the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna 1 as we descend through the paved streets of Marpha, Tukucho (2592m), and on to our destination of Ghasa. *7 hours walking.*

**Days 16/17** Skirting the river, our path rises and falls to pass the waterfalls of Rupse Chhara, past the village of Titre (1524m), the larger settlement of Dana (1463m) and onwards to Tatopani. *5 hours walking.*

Enjoy the next day relaxing in the thermal pools for which Tatopani is famous for. The town also boasts a number of good restaurants and teahouses where you can relax and unwind before the final part of your journey.

**Day 18** Today we climb up to Ghare and continue on our trek to Ghoropani (2853m). A short side trip to the viewpoint of Poon Hill from which Dhaulagiri and Tukucho Peak can be seen in all their glory is another 'must do'. *7 hours walking.*

**Day 19** Today we descend through tropical forest passing small settlements along the way until reaching a 'stairway' that leads onwards to Birethanti. *7 hours walking.*

**Day 20** We begin our day climbing to the village of Chandrakhot (1567m) and beyond before a descent which offers brilliant views of Annapurna. Our final descent takes us through forest and rice fields through the town of Suikhet and on to Pokhara (900m). *5 to 7 hours walking.*

**Days 21 to 23** A short flight takes us back to the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu, with time to finish shopping before depart Kathmandu and arrive back in the UK.