

# Nepal Himalaya Trek & Hospice Care Project

Saturday 9th - Wednesday 20th November 2019



**DESTINATION: NEPAL / DURATION: 12 DAYS / DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING**

## Nepal

Nepal is a landlocked Himalayan country covering an area of 147,181 sq. km, bordered by Chinese Tibet to the north and by India to the south, east and west. For a small nation, the Nepali landscape is diverse, ranging from the humid Terai in the south to the lofty Himalaya in the north. Nepal is a country of highly diverse and rich geography, culture and religions. The mountainous north contains eight of the world's ten highest mountains, including Annapurna I and Mount Everest.

## Kathmandu

Kathmandu is the largest city in Nepal and the capital. The city is at an elevation of 1400m and it is home to around 1 million people. This bustling city features numerous UNESCO World Heritage sites, famous temples, holy rivers and sprawling residential areas. In the touristy areas such as Thamel, souvenir shops, restaurants and bars abound making this a big draw to backpackers and travellers. This incredible city is the perfect start and end to your challenge and offers an experience not to be missed.

## The Hospice Care Project

You will spend two days helping a non-profit hospice care organisation in Kathmandu which offers services and support to terminally ill patients and their families. It was set up by a team of local doctors in 2000 and since then has provided free medicine, therapy and support to those in need. The tasks we expect to be involved with will include basic refurbishment at the hospice, such as repainting and decorating rooms or improving the kitchen or bathroom facilities. Our local team will be visiting the hospital regularly prior to our visit to put the firm plans in place ready for our arrival, and we'll provide a further update prior to departure.

**Difficulty:**  
**Challenging**

Walking up to 8 hours a day for 5 consecutive days at altitude up to 3400m. Cold climate, simple accommodation.

**Accommodation:**

Hotel (4 nights), guesthouse (2 nights), teahouses during trek (4 nights).



**Weather in November:**  
Average high (daytime) temperature: 25°C.  
Average low (night) temperature: -5°C.

**Terrain:**

Undulating trails. Some entire days walking uphill or downhill. Expect stony trails, muddy forest floors, rocky steps or scree slopes and dusty paths.



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## Challenge Cost:

Registration fee: £295  
 and either...  
 Self funded balance: £1750  
 or  
 Sponsorship to charity: £3500

## What's included in the price?

Return flights from London (inc. airport taxes), all transfers and transport in Nepal, accommodation in 3\* hotel (4 nights), guesthouse in Pokhara (2 nights), teahouses on trek (4 nights), all meals, local expert English-speaking guides and support crew, trekking permits, a UK Different Travel tour manager.

## What's not included in the price?

Personal expenses (e.g. drinks, souvenirs etc.), vaccinations, Nepal visa, travel insurance, tips (approx. £25-£35 per person), personal trekking kit.



## The Trek

This 5-day trek is a great opportunity to witness the culture and tradition in the Nepalese countryside. As we follow the Ghorepani Poon Hill trail you will enjoy the views of the snowy peaks of the Annapurna massif and a highlight will be the awe-inspiring panoramic views which unfold from Poon Hill at sunrise, the highest altitude point of the trek at 3400m.

## Who accompanies us?

The trek is accompanied by first aid trained local guides who have an excellent knowledge of hiking in the region. You will also be supported by an excellent team of assistant guides and porters who together make your journey possible. You will be accompanied throughout your challenge by a Different Travel Company UK tour manager.

## What is the terrain like?

The terrain will vary throughout the 5 days but overall there will be lots of undulating trails throughout the day. The first two days you will gain altitude so you will spend more time going uphill. On day three you will spend the morning ascending and the afternoon descending, and the final two days will be descending. It is critical that your training includes hill walking and trekking up and down gradients. Underfoot you will find stony trails, muddy forest floors, rocky steps or scree slopes and in some places it will be very dusty (bring a 'Buff' to cover your nose/mouth). There may be some suspension bridges to cross. Each day's trek is between 5 and 8 hours in duration (variable depending on group pace).

## How tough is it?

This trek is graded challenging because of the combination of long days trekking over varying terrain (including some days where you will trek uphill all day), the increasing altitude as the trek progresses, and the basic conditions at the teahouse accommodation.



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## What is the climate like?

Temperatures are dependent upon the weather which is usually clear and sunny in the morning, with clouds coming in during the afternoon. You can expect days to be sunny and warm (between 15°C to 25°C) and nights to be cold (between -5°C to 5°C). It is important to be prepared for all weather conditions and temperatures by packing technical non-cotton layers and waterproofs.

*"The food was particularly impressive and the spots chosen to stay each night were beautiful."*

## Where will we sleep?

You will stay in a hotel in Kathmandu, a guesthouse in Pokhara and teahouses, which are locally owned lodges, during the trek.

Teahouses are comfortable but basic and feature a main lounge-dining area which is heated with a central yak-dung burning stove which makes it a very cosy environment. You will take your breakfast and evening meals in this room and will probably play cards and get to know each other here each evening too.

The bedrooms usually have two or three single beds per room which have mattresses and occasionally pillows and blankets. You should bring your own sleeping bag.

Most tea houses have hot water showers or access to buckets of hot water for washing (payable locally). Battery charging facilities, mineral water, soft drinks, hot drinks, snacks and souvenirs may be available to purchase at many tea houses along the way.

*"I loved the trip, it was life changing and I am definitely going to do another one."*

## What about toilet facilities?

Toilet facilities at the teahouses usually include at least one Western sit-down toilet and Asian squat toilets. The toilets usually flush but please ensure you dispose of toilet paper in the bins provided, as putting paper in the toilet will cause blockages. Toilet paper is not provided so you will need to bring your own.

During the trek you will need to pack up any toilet paper you use to dispose of properly at the teahouse. Never leave toilet paper or other litter on the trail.



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## What about altitude?

You will slowly ascend to 3400m by day 3, after gradual acclimatisation on the previous two days. 3400m is considered high altitude and some people may feel some symptoms of altitude exposure. Your local guides are very experienced in spotting the signs of altitude sickness but it is important that you do some research into the effects so you can be aware of how your body is adjusting. A great source of information can be found at <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Altitude-sickness/Pages/Introduction.aspx> or <http://www.traveldoctor.co.uk/altitude.htm>.

Common symptoms of mild altitude sickness are headache, nausea, loss of appetite, disturbed sleep and fatigue. These generally subside after a few days, once your body acclimatises to the altitude. It is vital that you make your guides and tour manager aware of any symptoms so you can be monitored.

### Important info about altitude:

- If you begin to show symptoms of moderate altitude sickness, don't go higher until symptoms decrease.
- If symptoms increase, you must descend immediately. Your tour guide and tour manager's decision for you to descend must be respected.
- Different people acclimatise at different rates; keep aware of your own symptoms.
- Stay well hydrated. You need to drink lots of fluids to remain properly hydrated (at least three litres per day from water, soup, tea, juices etc.). Urine output should be copious and clear to pale yellow.
- Take it easy and don't overexert yourself when you first arrive at altitude.
- Avoid tobacco, alcohol and drugs including sleeping pills and opiates such as codeine. These decrease respiratory drive during sleep resulting in a worsening of symptoms.
- Eat a high calorie diet while at altitude.
- Acclimatisation is inhibited by overexertion, dehydration, and alcohol.



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## Who can take part?

This challenge can be undertaken by anyone of any age (min. 18 unless accompanied by an adult). It is advised that you are of a good fitness level before departure to ensure fast recovery from each day's exertions. An ideal candidate for the trek would be someone who enjoys being out of their comfort zone and trying something new.

## How fit do I need to be?

It is advised that you are of a good fitness level before departure to ensure fast recovery each day. If you do not already regularly exercise it is crucial that you start training (including plenty of hills) before departure to ensure your best chance of enjoyment on the trip. You must be prepared to carry a daypack weighing 6-7kg once your water bottles are filled. Attempting to complete the trek without training will be difficult and will hinder your experience and the experience of your teammates.

## Online personal training

The Different Travel Company has a link with online personal training company Brightside Personal Training, who are offering a great value online training package for those who may not have access to fitness advice tailored to their requirements: <http://brightsidept.kajabi.com/sp/34357>

The best training for trekking in the mountains is hill walking but this can be complemented with swimming, running, cycling, gym workouts, team sports, boot camps etc. You can download a number of free apps, which will help you train and track your progress. E.g. MapMyRide, C25K (couch to 5k run), MyFitnessPal etc.

## Health considerations

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues must be noted and (if relevant) signed off by your GP. Any conditions that develop must be declared and a new medical form completed and signed.



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## Itinerary

### Day 1 (Saturday 9th November 2019):

#### **London to Kathmandu**

Depart London on an indirect overnight flight to Kathmandu.

### Day 2 (Sunday 10th November 2019):

#### **Kathmandu**

Upon arrival in Kathmandu you will transfer to a central hotel. Depending on flight times there may be an opportunity for you to explore the local area before gathering together for a briefing on the days ahead. Welcome dinner at a local restaurant tonight.

*Overnight: Hotel.*

### Days 3 - 4 (Monday 11th – Tuesday 12th November 2019):

#### **Kathmandu**

We spend two full days assisting at the Hospice Care Project in Kathmandu. Possible tasks include painting, decorating, refurbishment and so on. More details will be provided nearer the time. *Overnight: Hotel*

### Day 5 (Wednesday 13th November 2019):

#### **Kathmandu to Pokhara**

After breakfast, we depart for the scenic drive to Pokhara (approx. 6 hours). You will spend the afternoon in this beautiful lakeside town where you can take in the sights or even do some last-minute shopping in preparation for your trek!

*Overnight: Guesthouse.*

### Day 6 (Thursday 14th November 2019):

#### **Pokhara – Tikhedhunga - Ulleri**

This morning we transfer to Nayapul (approx. 2 hours' drive) from where you commence the trek. You will follow the banks of the Bhurungdi Khola River as far as Tikhedhunga (1575m) where your final challenge for the day is a steep uphill walk to Ulleri where you stay the night in a teahouse (2073m).

*Trekking: Approx. 10km trek / 530m ascent.*

*Overnight: Teahouse.*

### Day 7 (Friday 15th November 2019):

#### **Ulleri - Ghorepani**

A day of ascent! Today we will gradually gain more altitude as we walk for about 5 hours uphill to the overnight teahouse in Ghorepani (2800m). As we approach Ghorepani we will pass through stunning rhododendron forests.

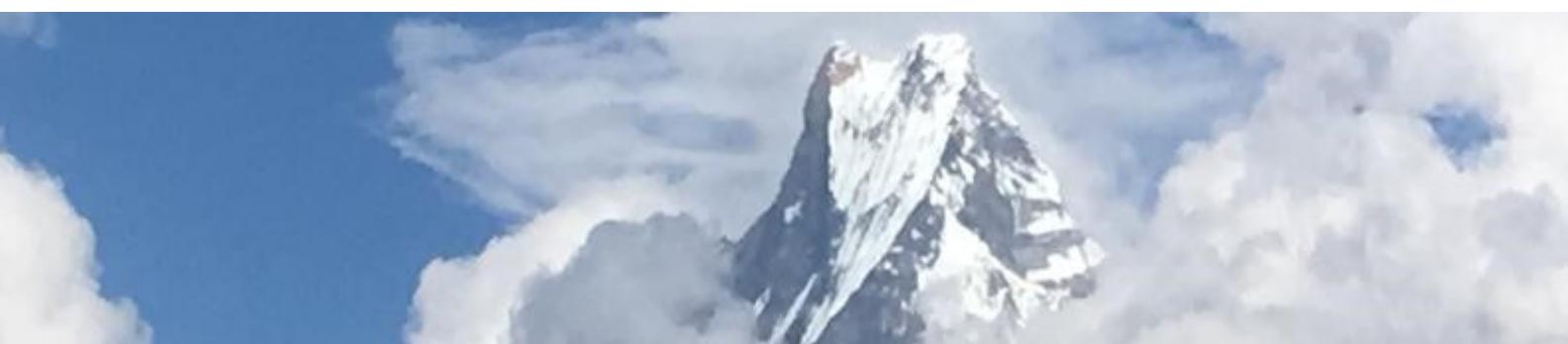
*Trekking: Approx. 11km trek / 1400m ascent.*

*Overnight: Teahouse.*



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## Itinerary

### Day 8 (Saturday 16th November 2019):

#### Ghorepani - Poon Hill - Tadapani

An hour-long pre-dawn ascent gives us the opportunity to see the fascinating views of the Annapurnas and Dhaulagiri glowing in the morning sun from Poon Hill (3400m). After either a picnic breakfast or breakfast back at the teahouse, it is a predominantly downhill walk through magnificent oak and rhododendron forests to reach Tadapani, where you will have another chance to enjoy views of Annapurna South and Machapuchare (Fishtail Mountain).

*Trekking: Approx. 11km trek / 330m ascent / 640m descent.*

*Overnight: Teahouse.*

### Day 9 (Sunday 17th November 2019):

#### Tadapani - Ghandruk

Today's descent to Ghandruk is relatively easy (shorter and mostly downhill), with spectacular views of the Annapurna and Machapuchare snow-capped peaks. From Tadapani you descent through mossy forests and deep gorges, before the scenery changes to a drier more sparse forest as we approach Ghandruk. Ghandruk is a beautiful Gurung Village, where most of the inhabitants were Gurkhas.

*Trekking: Approx. 8km trek / 700m descent.*

*Overnight: Teahouse.*

### Day 10 (Monday 18th November 2019):

### Ghandruk - Pokhara

Today is our final day of trekking as we descend to Birethanti (approx. 6 hour walk), from where we travel by road back to Pokhara. Overnight in a guesthouse.

*Trekking: Approx. 13km trek / 1000m descent.*

*Overnight: Guesthouse.*

### Day 11 (Tuesday 19th November 2019):

#### Pokhara - Kathmandu

Today we travel back to Kathmandu (approx. 6 hours drive). This afternoon is at leisure if time permits.

*Overnight: Hotel.*

### Day 12 (Wednesday 20th November 2019):

#### Kathmandu - London

Today you will transfer to the airport for your indirect flight home. Flight may arrive the following day depending on flight times.

*Note: The day-to-day program is subject to flight schedules, weather, general conditions and the progress of the group. While we do not anticipate any changes to the itinerary, we cannot be held responsible for changes made due to unexpected circumstances. Ultimately the safety and health of the group takes priority in all circumstances.*

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## Nepal Himalaya Trek & Community Project Information: A-Z

**A is for Arrival.** At the time of writing (Nov 2017) British nationals require a 15-day single entry tourist visa for travel to Nepal. This can be obtained on arrival at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport for US\$25 or £21 cash after completion of an online visa-on-arrival application <http://online.nepalimmigration.gov.np> (recommended) or in advance from the Royal Nepalese Embassy in London (£20 plus postage). You will be provided with full details of how to apply 8 weeks before your departure. *Please do not apply for your visa before we have sent you this information.*

**A is also Accommodation.** You will be staying in hotels in Kathmandu, guesthouses in Pokhara and teahouses during the trek. The teahouses are run by friendly local families and are basic but clean. Bedrooms are normally just a bed with a pillow and blankets, and the cosy main room where you have your meals is also where you will relax in the evenings,

playing cards and chatting with other trekkers.

**A is also for Altitude.** Please see above for more information. The altitude you experience on this trek is up to 3400m but you may notice some changes as your body adjusts, including a mild headache or slight breathlessness on the days trekking above 3000m. Your local guides are very experienced in spotting the signs of altitude sickness but it is important that you also research the effects so you can be aware of how your body is adjusting. A great source of information can be found at <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Altitude-sickness/Pages/Introduction.aspx> or <http://www.traveldoctor.co.uk/altitude.htm>. Please be honest about how you are feeling if you do suffer from any of these (or any other) symptoms so our local guides can ensure your safety and well-being.

**B is for Begging.** You will encounter some beggars in

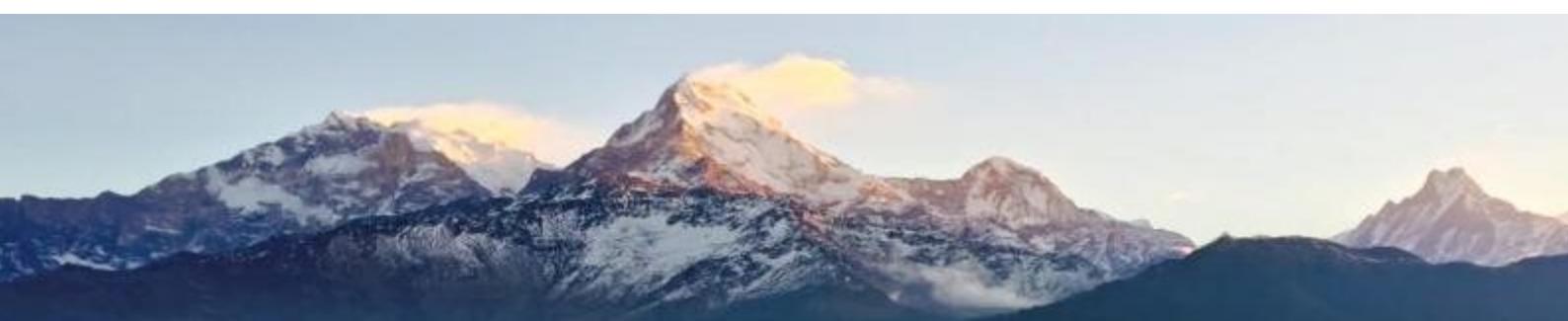
Kathmandu especially in and around Durbar Square due to the good, but ultimately wrong intentions of tourists. We respectfully request that you do not give to beggars or children as it encourages reliance on tourists. Please speak to your local guide for more information on ways to give appropriately.

**B is also for Books.** There are several guidebooks available about Nepal and the Annapurna region including: Lonely Planet Trekking in the Nepal Himalaya (Jan 2016); ISBN: 978-1741792720; £14.99 Cicerone Trekking Guide: Annapurna: A Trekker's Guide (January 2013); ISBN: 978-1852846992; £16.95 Lonely Planet Nepali Phrasebook (Sept 2014); ISBN: 978-1743211908 £4.99



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**B is also for Boots.** You will need to wear good quality hiking boots so please ensure you have some well in advance of departure so you can break them in properly. Look out for ones with good ankle support and a Vibram sole. Make sure you try on lots of pairs before you choose some. You are recommended to wear your boots on the plane just in case there are any problems/delays with your luggage. Comfortable boots are one of the most difficult pieces of luggage to replace/hire at short notice.

**B is also for Bottle.** You will need a bottle to carry your own drinking water of up to 3 litres per day. Most people will bring a two-litre hydration system such as a CamelBak or Platypus plus a one litre backup bottle (e.g. Sigg or Nalgene). Hot water may be available to buy so bringing a flask or a metal Sigg-style bottle (which can double up as a hot water bottle) is a worthwhile consideration.

Please note: cheaper alternatives to CamelBak and Platypus brands are notorious for leaking or having problems.

We strongly advise that you test all your equipment, particularly water reservoirs, multiple times before the trek on your training walks so you know how to use it and are certain it won't leak. Please also see D is for Dehydration and W is for Water.

**C is for Communications.** Staying in touch is easy from Nepal. Hotels usually offer free Wi-Fi and most mobile phone networks can use roaming (contact your provider for information about charges and to set up roaming on your phone). On the trek, mobile phone access will vary depending on your home network, roaming capabilities, contract type and mobile handset. Don't forget to turn off data roaming to avoid unexpected data charges. If you wish to use data while in Nepal you are recommended to purchase a local SIM card but your phone must be unlocked for this to work.

**C is also for Clothing.** The clothing you bring for the trek should keep you warm, sheltered from the wind and

dry. To best achieve this you should bring non-cotton technical base layers and use the layering system for maximum comfort, with an insulated jacket and waterproof shell as your outer layers. During the day you may only need a t-shirt and lightweight trekking trousers but you may need to add a long sleeved mid-layer or fleece or even waterproofs, when you stop for lunch and in the afternoons when the weather begins to get cooler. These layers can then be removed once it dries up or warms up again, or once you start moving again. Please see the packing list below for more details.

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## Nepal Himalaya Trek & Community Project Information: A-Z

### C is also for Culture Shock.

Nepal is different to other places in Asia and as such you may experience a certain amount of culture shock initially, particularly in Kathmandu. Some things to be aware of include: pollution and garbage abound in the cities; streets, markets, and bazaars are jam-packed with people and vehicles (particularly mopeds), and streets tend to be narrow. Just take it slowly and try to learn about the local culture to put into perspective these differences. **See also B is for Begging, E is for Etiquette and H is for Haggling.**

**D is for Day pack.** Throughout the trek you must carry a daypack so please pack lightly. We recommend a 25-30 litre pack with a chest strap and hip belt. It is likely to weigh around 6-7kg when packed and with your water so please take this equivalent with you during your training trips so you are adequately prepared. You will need to carry essentials with you during the day as you will

not have access to your main luggage as it will be carried by porters. Essentials include waterproofs, warm layers, sun hat, sunglasses, gloves, warm hat, sun cream, water, tissues/wet wipes, nappy sacks for used toilet paper, hand sanitizer, basic first aid kit, head torch, camera and spare batteries etc.

### D is also for Dehydration.

Day time temperatures can rise above 25°C during the day and even when it is cold you lose fluid, salts and sugars in your sweat so it is wise to consume at least 3l of water, plus plenty of soups, teas and coffees to avoid the risk of dehydration. You should also bring a small supply of rehydration salts with you. You can buy these in different flavours from chemists and just add the powder to quantity of water mentioned on the packet. Electrolyte tablets offer the benefit of turning your water into a sport drink which helps prevent dehydration before it begins; recommended brands include Nuun or High5 and are available in a wide

variety of flavours for around £6 for 12 tablets. **See also B is for Bottle and W is for Water.**

### D is also for Dietary Requirements.

Any special dietary requirements, including food allergies, vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free etc., will be catered for to the best of The Different Travel Company's, and our local partners', ability however we cannot guarantee that food preparation will have taken place in a contamination free environment. Please ensure that you notify us of any dietary requirements at the time of booking.



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**D is also for Difficulty.** This trek is classified as challenging. The trek goes to a maximum of 3400m altitude and each day you can expect to be walking for around 5-8 hours at a moderate pace on variable gradient terrain. Regular breaks are taken, but long days walking are inevitable. There will still be some big hills to climb as well as the infamous 'Nepali flat', a little bit up and a little bit down.

It is essential that you are fit enough to trek for at least 8 hours at a time for multiple days; you are required to train in preparation.

Training should mainly comprise of hill walking but can be complemented with speed walking, running, cycling, gym workouts, team sports etc. See also page 5 for information about training.

**D is also for Discount.** Nomad Travel have kindly offered a 10% discount against any purchase of kit and equipment online or in-store and 10% discount off vaccinations at their travel clinics. Also Cotswold Outdoor are offering our clients 15% discount for use at their

stores or online. You will be emailed a voucher with your booking confirmation.

**E is for Electricity.** Electricity in Nepal is 220V, 50Hz. The plugs used are European two round pin plugs or 3 large round pins in a triangle. Electricity will be available at the hotel in Kathmandu and at some of the teahouses during the trek. Where facilities permit on the trek, there will be a fee to charge batteries, phones etc. which ranges from 100 rupees per hour to 350 rupees per hour.

**E is also for Emergencies and Evacuations.** In the unlikely event of a serious illness or accident, the local team will ensure you are transferred as swiftly as possible to the nearest hospital (probably Pokhara). Your travel insurance MUST cover you for airlifting/emergency evacuations as this is the most common way to take someone to medical facilities in this region.

**E is also for Environment.** The wonderful environment of the Himalaya is also an extremely fragile one.

Increasing population density and number of trekkers threatens to destroy the very beauty which attracts us in the first place. We are environmentally conscious and aim to minimise our impact as much as possible to help protect and preserve this beautiful environment for future generations. Key points:

- Never leave toilet paper or litter on the trail.
- Don't dispose of fruit peel, cores or seeds on the ground; although they decompose eventually they are unsightly and may attract animals.
- Turn off lights when not in rooms.
- Minimise your water usage by having short showers.
- Be considerate of other trekkers.



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**E is also for Etiquette.** Always endeavour to be polite and respectful and take your lead from the local people around you in terms of what is acceptable or not. When in public places you should respect the preferences and cultural norms of those around you. If you show respect then it will be reciprocated. You should always remove shoes before entering temples and ask permission before taking any photographs inside. Licking your fingers is considered an unpleasant habit and should be avoided. It is common to slurp tea and hot drinks. Public displays of affection are considered inappropriate. Being respectful to your guides and porters, saying please and thank you and being aware of the feelings of other group members are key things to bear in mind.

**E is also for Expenses.** You will require small amounts of cash for various things throughout the trip, including tipping, drinks, snacks, battery charging, hot showers and other personal expenses. As a guideline, around £150 in

Nepalese rupees should be sufficient although of course it depends on how many drinks, souvenirs and snacks you wish to purchase. You should take plenty of low denomination notes (200 rupees or smaller) with you on the trek as change is very difficult to come by, particularly at higher altitude villages. There are lots of ATMs in Kathmandu if you wish to withdraw cash, but be aware that your bank may charge for overseas withdrawals and transactions and some banks block overseas transactions so inform your bank before departure. There are no places to withdraw cash along the trail. In Kathmandu there are banks where you can exchange currency but please do not bring Scottish or Channel Island notes with you as these will be rejected.

Typical costs include:  
 100 rupees to refill a 1l bottle with mineral water  
 100-300 rupees for 1l boiled water  
 0 rupees for cold, unpurified water  
 100-350 rupees to charge batteries for 1 hour

400-600 rupees to have a hot shower  
 145-600 rupees for soft drinks and snacks (Mars bar, Twix, Pringles, Coke, Toblerone etc.)

**F is for First Aid kit.** You should have a small first aid kit of essential items which is for your own personal use. You must ensure you have access to your own first aid kit in your daypack. Suggested items to include: personal prescription medicine, Paracetamol, ibuprofen, plasters, blister plasters, insect repellent (containing 50% DEET), anti-histamine tablets, Imodium (Loperamide), rehydration sachets, lip balm with SPF, antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, muscle rub e.g. Deep Heat, zinc oxide tape etc.



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**F is also for Food.** Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included and meals are taken at local restaurants in Kathmandu, at the guesthouse in Pokhara and at teahouses during the trek. Although the food is usually plentiful and delicious, the teahouse menu during the trek is often repeated with most teahouses offering the same variety of rice, soup, dal bhat, potato and noodle dishes.

A variety of bread, pancakes and egg dishes are generally available for breakfast.

Lunch is typically a hearty soup, momos, fried rice, noodles or other light meal.

Dinner includes dal bhat, fried rice, noodles, curry and so on.

You can purchase snacks such as biscuits, chocolate and soft drinks at the tea houses (not included - payable separately). Nepali food is similar to Indian, with some Chinese influences.

**G is for Gloves.** You should take a warm pair of gloves as the wind can be cool on some of the days, and in the evenings.

**H is for Haggling.** When shopping for gifts in market

places where there are no price tags on items it is expected that you will haggle. The first price is sometimes double the value of the item, but remember that you should engage with the vendor to encourage rapport before haggling then only pay what you think is a good price for the item, not trying to get the price as low as possible.

**H is also for Head Torch.** This is invaluable for finding your way to the toilet in the teahouses or reading in the evenings etc. Petzl make good quality head torches but there are many other brands offering good head torches available if you shop around. Please ensure you take an LED torch, as ones with bulbs are not bright enough, and bring some spare batteries. Wind up torches are not suitable.

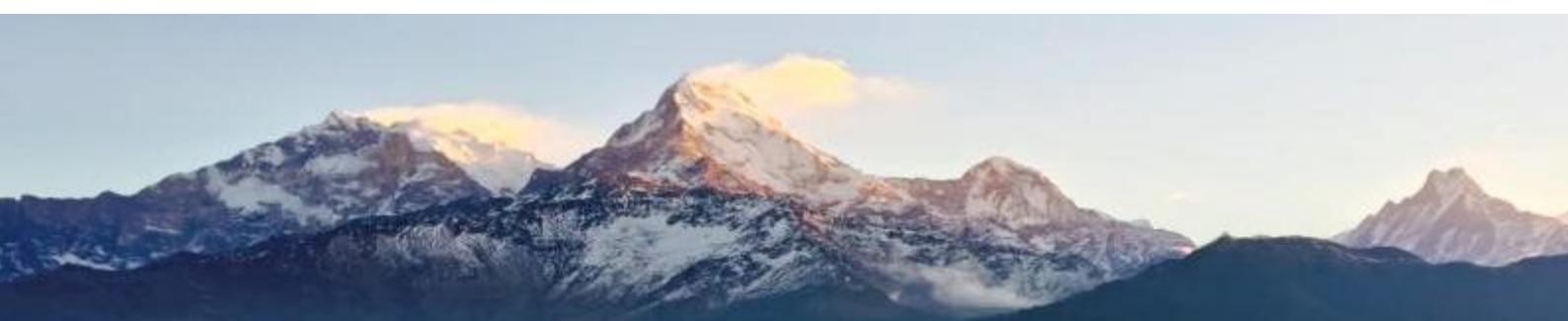
**H is also for Health.** Different Travel regrets that we cannot provide medical advice on recommendations on

vaccinations you should have because each person's medical requirements will differ depending on their medical and travel history. You MUST see your own GP or travel health professional for a personalised medical assessment at least 8 weeks before travelling to ensure that all appropriate vaccinations are up to date. If your GP does not specialise in travel vaccinations, please contact the Nomad Travel Health Clinic. Different Travel and Nomad have teamed up to offer you a 10% discount on kit and vaccinations (discount code given on booking). For general information on vaccinations, visit <http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk> but your GP or travel health professional should be the first stop for an in depth consultation tailored to your medical history.



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### H is also for Hiking Poles.

Most people find them very useful as it takes pressure off the knees and can make trekking easier, particularly during the descent, but some people find them a hindrance. You are advised to try them out during your training walks to see if you think they would suit you.

**H is also for Hygiene.** During the trek, there may be shower facilities available which cost around 400-600 rupees depending on the teahouse and whether the water is hot or cold. The quality of the shower can vary widely from what you are familiar with at home. You are advised to bring a large pack of baby wipes and use natural or biodegradable soap/shampoo so as not to contaminate the ground, or nearby water sources which may be used for irrigation or consumption. Lush products are particularly good.

### I is for Insect Repellent.

There may be some

mosquitoes in Kathmandu, so it is advised that you take repellent with you. 50% DEET is the most effective repellent available as recommended by The Department of Health. Be careful when using any DEET product as it can melt some plastics, remove dye from fabrics and damage watch faces.

**I is also for Insurance.** The Different Travel Company will do everything possible to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip however unexpected things can occur such as your cancellation, delays, medical problems and baggage loss etc. The purchase of travel insurance, such as a policy from Campbell Irvine, is mandatory and you are advised to organise this at the time of booking to ensure you are covered immediately. <http://www.campbellirvinedirect.com/differenttravel>

It is ESSENTIAL that your policy covers emergency helicopter airlifting/evacuation as well as trekking at altitudes up to 3400m.

**K is for Kit bag.** You will need a trek kit bag which will be carried by porters. This will contain your change of clothes, sleeping bag etc. It must be strong, light and waterproof. Some examples of kit bags include:

- North Face Base Camp duffle bag, (various sizes, waterproof)
- Mountain Equipment Wet and Dry Bag (various sizes, waterproof)
- Vango Dry Holdall (60 litres, waterproof)

Please shop around as there are many brands and models available in outdoors stores for various prices.

The capacity of your kitbag should be around 60-70 litres but as long as all your gear fits and is within the weight limit (10kg) it doesn't matter if it is larger or smaller. A solid suitcase or holdall with wheels is not suitable for the trek.



# Nepal Himalaya Trek & Hospice Care Project

Saturday 9th - Wednesday 20th November 2019



**DESTINATION: NEPAL / DURATION: 12 DAYS / DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING**

## Nepal Himalaya Trek & Community Project Information: A-Z

**L is for Language.** Nepali is the official language and is an Indo-Aryan language spoken in Nepal, Bhutan, and some parts of India and Myanmar. Roughly 50% of the population speak Nepali and many other Nepalese speak it as a second language. Here are some helpful words and phrases to get you by:

**Hello/Goodbye** Namaste  
**How are you?** Tapaai laai kasto chha?  
**Thank you** Dhanyabad  
**Excuse me** Hajur  
**Water** Pani  
**What is this?** Yo ke ho?  
**How Much?** Kati Ho?  
**Good Luck** saphalhos  
**Yes** ho  
**No** hoina  
**That's Expensive** mahango bhayo  
**I'm Sick** ma birami chu

**L is also for Laundry.** Laundry facilities will be available at the hotel in Kathmandu and charged per item or weight.

**L is also for Luggage.** You will need the following 4

luggage items.

1. A small daypack at around 25-30 litres which you will carry yourself during the trek. This should have a hip belt and chest strap for optimal comfort.
2. A kit bag to hold your trek luggage which is carried by porters.
3. A suitcase or large rucksack to hold your entire luggage for the international flights. This can be left in the Kathmandu hotel luggage room while trekking.
4. 1-2 combination padlocks for keeping your baggage secure.

bank of your travel plans before departure. There are no ATMs along the trail so you must bring enough cash with you for the trek. When travelling around Nepal, change large bills whenever you can as you will find these difficult to change at the tea houses on the trail. Please note: Do not bring Scottish or Channel Islands notes with you to exchange as these are likely to be rejected by local bureau de changes. **See also E is for Expenses.**

**M is for Money.** Nepalese Rupees are used in Nepal and the exchange rate is 135 Rupees to the Pound (Nov 2017). You cannot buy Rupees outside of Nepal so you will either need to bring cash in Pounds, or withdraw cash from ATMs. There are ATMs in Kathmandu and Pokhara if you wish to withdraw cash, but be aware that your bank may charge for overseas withdrawals and transactions. Some banks block overseas transactions so inform your

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**N is for Nibbles.** You must bring a selection of snacks and nibbles for your trek. Jelly babies, Haribo, dried fruit, nuts, energy bars, Kendal mint cake, flapjacks Mr Kipling individually wrapped cake slices etc. are great snacks. Please only bring snacks you enjoy eating; if you don't like them at home, you won't like them while you're trekking.

**P is for Photocopies.** Please ensure you scan and photocopy of all your documents (insurance details, flight numbers, passport, credit/debit cards etc.) before departure. Email a copy of these to yourself and bring a copy with you during the trip which is kept separately from the originals. If you lose any of your documents you will then have access to a copy online and with you.

**P is also for Photography.** When taking photographs of the local people, it is polite to ask their permission first. Taking a photograph of someone without their

permission, especially in rural areas, can cause offence. Older people, particularly ladies prefer not to be photographed but in contrast young children are often very keen to be photographed.

**P is also for Poverty.** It is important not to underestimate the psychological impact of viewing extreme poverty, and a sense of helplessness and guilt that often comes from it. Some people respond to such sights by feeling they must do everything they can to help everyone they can. The risk with this is that it leads to disappointment and disillusionment as no one person can do everything. The secret is to recognise the signs (raised levels of stress, feeling emotional, guilty, frustrated and angry), and to set realistic goals about what you can and cannot do. We also recommend that you avoid acting on impulse – especially when it comes to giving away money. People may seem genuine, but very many people still regard tourists as 'cash

cows' and act dishonestly and unethically. Do check with your guides before giving money. The general advice is question what you are told, don't be afraid to say no, and check it out with your guides.

**R is for Religion.** Nepal is the birthplace of Lord Buddha (thought to be Lumbini). Hindus constitute approximately 80% of the population. Buddhists make up 10%, Muslims 4%, Kirant 3%, other religions 3%.

**S is for Safety.** Incidences of petty theft such as pick-pocketing and bag snatching do occur in the larger cities and tourist areas so common sense precautions apply (no flashy jewellery, keep wallets out of sight, don't leave bags unattended etc.).



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### **S is also for Sleeping bag.**

You will be staying in teahouses but it will still be very cold particularly at the higher altitudes. Sleeping bags are available for hire in Kathmandu for approximately \$5 per day but you may prefer to bring your own. You will need a sleeping bag which has a comfort rating of at least -5°C.

Please note: a sleeping bag comfort rating is different to the extreme rating and an 'extreme rated -5°C' sleeping bag will not be warm enough. The European standard for sleeping bags measures four temperature ratings:

Comfort — the temperature at which a standard person can expect to sleep comfortably in a relaxed position.

Extreme — the minimum temperature at which a standard person can remain for six hours without risk of death from hypothermia.

Examples of suitable sleeping bags include: Ayacucho Solar 300 (£60); Vango Stratos 350 (£45); Women's Vango Nitestar 300W (£37.50); Mountain Hardwear Lamina 20

(£135); Mountain Equipment Women's Starlight III (-7°C comfort) £80. Please contact us for more advice.

**S is also for Sleeping bag liner.** A silk or thermal sleeping bag liner is also highly recommended as it adds an extra layer of insulation to your sleeping bag but also helps to keep it clean from sweat and dirt. You sweat around 300ml in a sleeping bag each night and without a liner this will absorb into your sleeping bag and will get very smelly. It is also handy to have if you get too hot at night and unzip your sleeping bag but want to be covered by something.

**S is also for Socks.** Your trek socks must be good quality, non-cotton, and fit well so they don't slip down or sag in your boots which can cause blisters. During your trek you will be wearing breathable boots and so you should wear socks to complement these. Cotton socks absorb sweat and hinder its evaporation, making them damp and

therefore likely to rub against your feet, causing blisters.

Socks containing Coolmax (a brand of polyester), nylon, or Merino wool all have wicking properties so instead of the fabric absorbing sweat, it pulls it away from the skin for it to evaporate. When you wear socks like these your feet will stay cool and you will avoid blisters.

### **S is also for Sunglasses.**

These are important as it can be very bright on the trek as it reflects off the snow on surrounding peaks. Polarized sunglasses are ideal, and taking a spare pair is recommended.

### **T is for Tickets (or e-tickets).**

These will be sent to you 2 weeks before departure.



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**T is also for Tipping.** We would recommend allowing around £25-35 per trekker for tips which is pooled together and shared between the guides and trek staff.

**T is also for Toilets.** During the trek there are toilets at each tea house (usually one Western, one Asian squat style). You will need to bring your own toilet paper (1-2 rolls) as this is not provided. You can purchase toilet paper at the tea houses if you run out. Please dispose of toilet paper in bins provided, not down the toilet, otherwise you will cause blockages.

If you need to use the toilet during the trek day, find a private place along the trail, dig a hole, cover up your waste and pack away any used toilet paper in a sanitary disposal bag or nappy sack to dispose of it properly at the tea house (please bring your own nappy sacks with you). Never leave toilet paper on the ground.

There are limited toilet facilities along the trails, but you may be able to use the facilities at tea houses, some shops and

restaurants but you may need to make a small contribution or purchase something from the shop.

**T is also for Towel.** During the trek there may be the opportunity to pay for a hot or cold shower or use buckets of water to wash. In this event, you will need a towel to dry yourself. A highly absorbent but lightweight and fast drying trek towel is recommended.

**W is also for Water.** Water is not provided during the trek but a new system for the provision of safe drinking water is in operation at teahouses along the route. In an effort to reduce plastic waste the sale of individual plastic bottles of water has been banned and each teahouse now has large water-cooler style water containers from which you can refill your own bottles and hydration systems at a small cost of 100 rupees per bottle (correct Nov. 2017). These large water containers are carried down when empty to be refilled and used again. Alternatively you can refill your water bottle with tap water and

purify it to make the water safe to drink. A recommended purification option is 'Biox Aqua' tablets which contains chlorine dioxide. This kills 99.9% of all known bacteria plus cysts such as cryptosporidium and giardia and doesn't leave water tasting of chemicals.

**Please note that all tap water on this trip is unsafe to drink,** this includes the tap water at the hotel and guesthouse. Only use bottled or purified water to drink, brush your teeth or rinse your mouth.

**Z is for Zinc Oxide tape.** When your boots start to rub against your feet, you can apply zinc oxide tape to the hot spot to stop a blister developing. Prevention is better than cure!

*Last updated November 2017.*



# Nepal Himalaya Trek & Hospice Care Project

## Suggested Packing List

### ESSENTIALS

- E-tickets + pre-departure info
- 
- Passport & copy
- 
- Nepal visa **or** US\$25 plus visa-on-arrival authorisation form
- 
- 2 passport photos (for trek permit)
- 
- Insurance policy details
- 
- Pen for immigration forms
- 
- Cash (£) / ATM card(s)
- 
- LED head torch + spare batteries
- 
- Adaptor 2 round pins (Euro)
- 
- Sunglasses
- 
- Plastic bags – various sizes
- 
- Protective gloves for project
- 
- Camera + spare batteries
- 

### CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

- Hiking boots
- 
- Trainers/slippers for evenings
- 
- Trek socks & underwear
- 
- Base layer top (long sleeved)
- 
- Non-cotton t-shirts
- 
- Warm fleece
- 
- Waterproof jacket + trousers
- 
- Lightweight trek trousers
- 
- Thermals for nights
- 
- Warm jacket (e.g. down)
- 
- Sun hat
- 
- Gloves and warm hat
- 
- Buff [www.buffwear.co.uk](http://www.buffwear.co.uk) (for dust)
- 
- Scarf/pashmina (for temples)
- 
- Casual attire for sightseeing
- 

### HYGIENE

- Shampoo / conditioner
- 
- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- 
- Antiperspirant/deodorant
- 
- Shower gel/ shave kit / loofah
- 
- Wet wipes
- 
- Toilet paper
- 
- Sun cream (high SPF)
- 
- Hand sanitizer
- 
- Small travel towel
- 
- Feminine hygiene products
- 
- Nappy sacks (for used toilet paper)
- 

### FIRST AID KIT

- Prescription medicine
- 
- 50% DEET insect repellent
- 
- Ibuprofen and Paracetamol
- 
- Plasters & blister plasters
- 
- Imodium (Loperamide)
- 
- Rehydration (e.g. Dioralyte)
- 
- Muscle rub (tiger balm/Deep Heat)
- 
- Anti-histamine tablets/cream
- 
- Antiseptic cream (e.g. Savlon)
- 
- Indigestion remedy (e.g. Gaviscon)
- 
- Lip balm with SPF protection
- 
- Scissors/tweezers
- 
- Throat lozenges
- 
- Decongestant
- 
- Zinc oxide tape (*optional*)
- 
- Spare glasses/contact lenses
- 

### OPTIONAL

- Video camera + charger
- 
- Mobile phone + charger
- 
- MP3 player/iPod
- 
- Walking pole(s)
- 
- Sewing kit
- 
- Notebook/diary
- 
- Books/playing cards
- 

### LUGGAGE

- Suitcase/rucksack for luggage
- 
- Trek kit bag/holdall
- 
- Daypack (25-30 litres)
- 
- Padlocks
- 

### EATING AND DRINKING

- 2 litre water bottle (e.g. CamelBak)
- 
- 1 litre standard water bottle
- 
- Energy snacks
- 
- Water purification (optional)
- 
- Electrolyte tablets (e.g. NUUN)
- 

### SLEEPING

- Ear plugs & eye mask
- 
- Sleeping bag (comfort -5°C)
- 
- Sleeping bag liner
- 
- Pyjamas (use your thermals)
- 

**PLEASE NOTE:** This list is just a guideline and is not exhaustive – it does not take into account your personal preference or requirements. If you have any questions please contact [info@different-travel.com](mailto:info@different-travel.com)

