



Culturally Immersive & Mini Trek

The background of the page is a collage of various Nepalese landscapes. It includes a large, snow-capped mountain peak with a bright sun rising behind it, a village with traditional stone and wood houses built on a hillside, and a close-up of a mountain peak with a rainbow. The collage is layered, with some images appearing more prominent than others.

# Essence of Nepal

**Tour Length: 15 days**

**Trip Style: Culture, connections & adventure**

**Trek difficulty: Easy**

**Group size: Minimum: 2 pax | Maximum: 10 pax**

Experience Nepal from the lively streets of Kathmandu to the calm of its mountains, lakes, villages and jungles. From the sacred stupas of Boudhanath and Pashupatinath to the medieval streets and pottery squares of Bhaktapur; sunrise over the Annapurna range at Nagarkot and Sarangkot to tranquil boat rides on Phewa Lake, each day immerses you in the country's living culture and spectacular landscapes. Along the way, wander through hilltop villages, trek forested trails with Himalayan vistas at every turn, encounter vibrant wildlife in Chitwan, and connect with local communities whose warmth and traditions leave a lasting impression.

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## **Day 1 (D)**

### **Arrival & transfer to hotel, Kathmandu & informal welcome dinner**

Arrive at Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu, where a member of our team will welcome you and transfer you to your hotel. Rest and relax after your journey, and take in the first impressions of Nepal's vibrant capital. Settle in, relax, and join us later for an informal dinner.

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## **Day 2 (B)**

### **Tour briefing & walk through Asan Bazaar, & visit UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Kathmandu Durbar Square & Swayambhunath Stupa**

Today we start the day with a full briefing about the tour. After any last-minute shopping and a lunch, we will stretch our legs as we walk through Thamel, the tourist area of Kathmandu and on through Asan Bazaar, then Kathmandu Durbar Square before heading to Swayambhunath Stupa to walk a kora with local pilgrims as they perform their early evening prayers.

Asan is the historical, cultural, and commercial centre of Kathmandu and where you are able to experience the real everyday life of Kathmanduites as they shop and go about their daily lives. This ancient bazaar has a myriad of alleyways interspersed with temples and monasteries and is the heart of the Kathmandu Newar community. The bustling, narrow streets are filled with tiny shops selling everything from spices, to kitchenware, hardware, plants, seeds, clothes, vegetables, meat, dried beans, fish, homemade pickle, delicious snacks, festival essentials and much, much more. A wander through these ancient streets is always a feast for the eyes and senses. We will arrive in Kathmandu Durbar Square, a dense cluster of old palaces, courtyards and beautifully carved temples that once hosted royal ceremonies and daily life in the old kingdom. Hanuman Dhoka Palace, the Kumari Ghar and a mix of pagoda-style shrines keep the square buzzing with heritage, worship and movement.

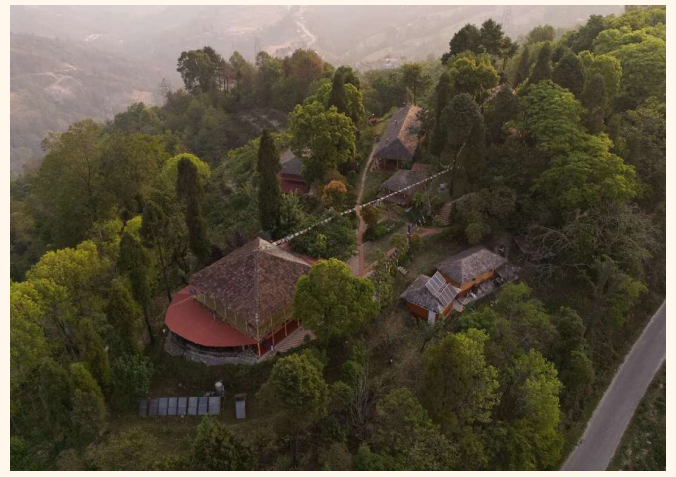
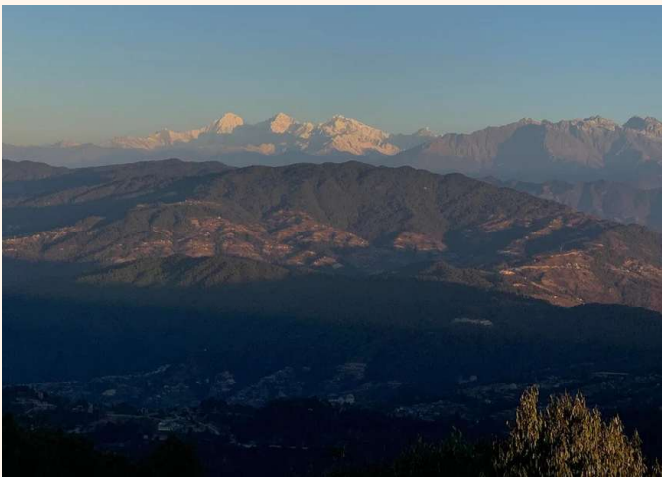
Swayambhunath or the Monkey Temple, is one of Nepal's most iconic and easily recognised temples with its fluttering prayer flags and unforgettable eyes of wisdom painted high on the central stupa. Sat majestically on top of a hill to the west of the city, this ancient and beautiful Buddhist temple sees a constant stream of locals and pilgrims walking in a clockwise kora and climbing the steps to worship at the many shrines surrounding the great stupa. From its hilltop location, Swayambhunath also offers some of the finest views across Kathmandu and the valley.



### Day 3 (B L D)

#### Drive to Nagarkot (c.1.5 - 2 hours), sunset views & time to relax or explore

After breakfast, drive to Nagarkot, a scenic hill station famous for its Himalayan vistas. Spend the afternoon on a leisurely walk around the area or relaxing at your hotel. As the day draws to a close, witness the stunning sunset over the Himalayan peaks, an unforgettable introduction to Nepal's majestic mountains.



### Day 4 (B)

#### Nagarkot sunrise & Bhaktapur tour

Rise early to watch the sunrise over the Himalayan range, as the peaks glow golden in the morning light. After breakfast, set out for a guided tour of Bhaktapur, a UNESCO World Heritage city celebrated for its

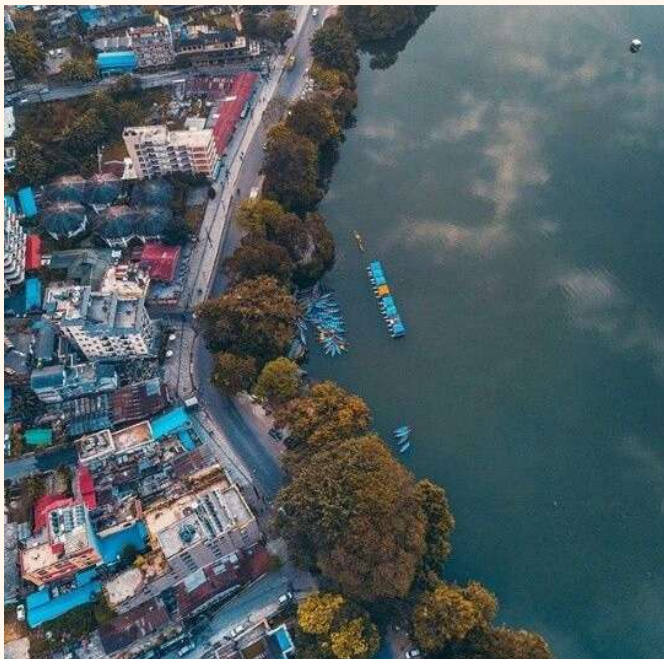
traditional Newar architecture, ornate temples, and cobbled streets. Explore the city's ancient squares, narrow alleys, and colourful temples before stepping into the Pottery Square, where generations of Newar potters have shaped clay into everyday objects, ritual items, and artworks. You'll step right into the heart of it; learning the techniques that local potters have refined over hundreds of years. The rhythm of the wheel, the earthy smell of wet clay, and the buzz of craftsmen working around you all create this grounded, almost meditative experience. Somewhere in the middle of it all, we'll pause and have Newari lunch together at a local spot. At the end of the day, you will return to Kathmandu.



## Day 5 (B)

### Flight to Pokhara, Phewa Lake & hike to Peace Pagoda

Take an early morning flight to Pokhara, followed by transfer to your hotel. After lunch, enjoy a serene boat ride across Phewa Lake, a mirror-like body of water reflecting the Annapurna range. Hike gently to the Peace Pagoda, perched on a hilltop, providing sweeping panoramic views of Pokhara city, Phewa Lake, and surrounding mountains. This combination of water and mountain scenery makes for a calm and picturesque afternoon.

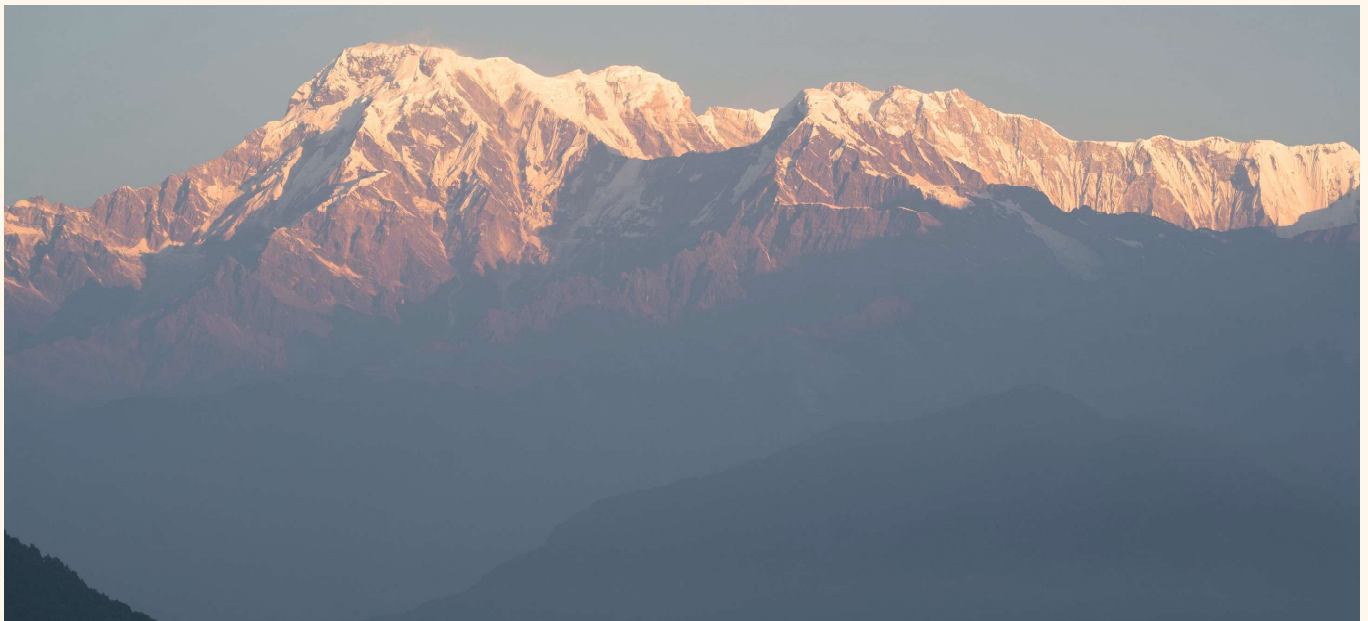
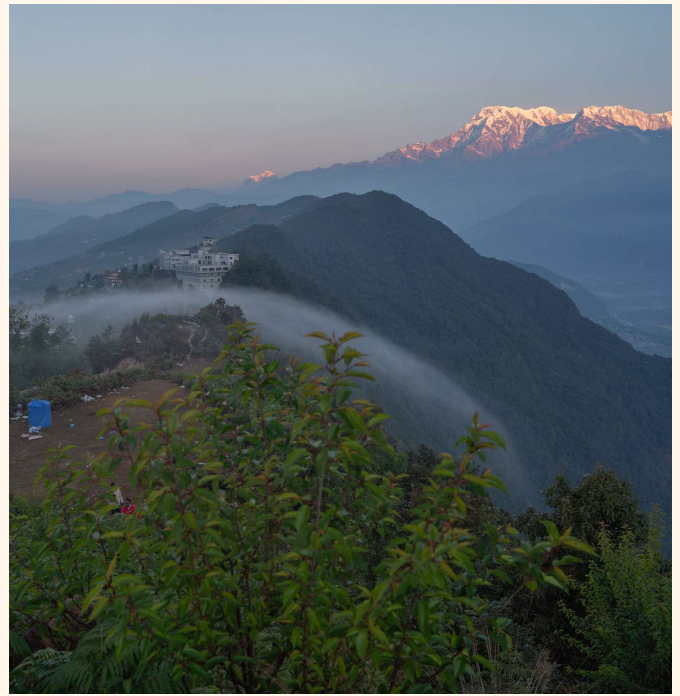
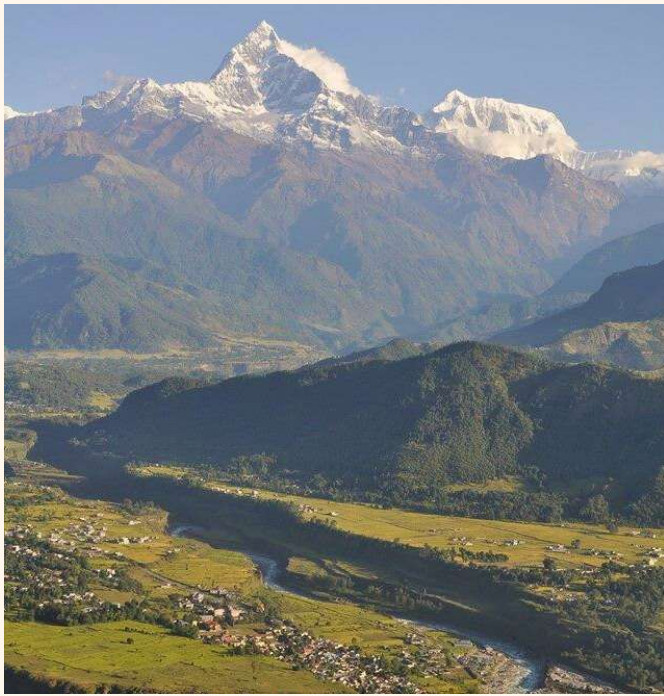


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## Day 6 (B)

### Sarangkot sunrise & free day in Pokhara

Wake before dawn for a cable car ride to Sarangkot to witness a spectacular sunrise over the Annapurna range. Return to your hotel for breakfast and spend the rest of the day at leisure. You may wish to explore Pokhara's vibrant Lakeside area, stroll along the lake, take a boat ride, or visit cultural sites and local cafes. This day offers flexibility for both relaxation and adventure.



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### **Day 7 (B L D)**

#### **Trek Day 1: Trek Kande - Australian Camp - Pothana (6km, c.3-4 hrs, 1,950m)**

Today is the start of your fully supported mini trek, offering you glimpses of traditional Gurung village life (an ethnic community of mid western Nepal), and closer views of the mighty Annapurna range.

Drive to Kande from Pokhara, the trailhead and get ready for a gentle hike. You'll go through lush, verdant forests, ascending to Australian Camp. Enjoy spectacular views of the Annapurna range, iconic Machhapuchhre (Fishtail) mountain and Lamjung Himal during a well-earned lunch break. Continue on a gentle incline to Pothana, a charming teahouse village. Overnight will be at a teahouse in Pothana, experiencing the warmth of local hospitality.



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### Day 8 (B L D)

#### Trek Day 2: Trek Pothana - Dhampus (2 km, c1-2 hrs, 1,650m)

Descend from Pothana to the picturesque Gurung village of Dhampus, with expansive views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges. Along the way, enjoy terraced fields, forest trails, and glimpses of rural life. Dhampus offers insight into local culture, with opportunities to interact with villagers and experience traditional lifestyles. Overnight will be in a teahouse in Dhampus.



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### Day 9 (B L D)

#### Trek Day 3: Trek Dhampus - Astam (8km, c.3 hrs, 1,600m)

Today's route gently descends through terraced farmland and subtropical forests, leading to Astam, an eco-village perched amidst hills. Astam provides panoramic 360-degree views of surrounding valleys and peaks. Spend the evening exploring the village and learning about its sustainable, community-focused initiatives. Overnight will be in a teahouse at Astam.





### Day 10 (B)

#### **Trek Day 4: Trek Astam - Milan Chowk (5.5km, c.2 hrs) - Drive to Pokhara (c.40 minutes)**

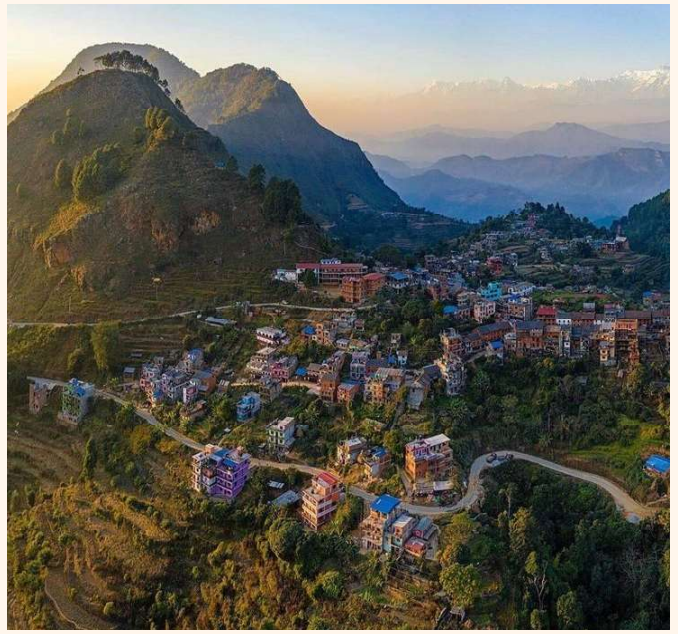
Follow a steep descent through forests, terraced hills and traditional settlements to Milan Chowk. From here, drive back to Pokhara, returning to the comfort of your hotel. The evening is free for relaxation, local sightseeing, lakeside dining or even a massage.



### Day 11 (B L D)

#### **Private transfer to Bandipur (81 km, c.2-3 hrs) & time to explore**

Drive to Bandipur, a hilltop town renowned for its preserved Newari architecture and panoramic mountain views. Spend the day exploring narrow cobbled streets, temples, squares and viewpoints, absorbing the town's relaxed atmosphere.



## Day 12 (B L D)

### **Private transfer to Chitwan National Park (88 km, c.2-3 hrs) & jungle safari activities**

As with all travel days, it's another early start as you head to the south of the country and the lush jungles of Chitwan National Park. You should arrive in Chitwan in time for lunch, and once settled in and fed, you will begin your jungle safari activities such as a jeep safari, canoe ride, bird watching, jungle walk, sunrise walk with elephants and cultural show. Chitwan is Nepal's first and most famous national park and it is situated in the lowlands of the Inner Terai. It was declared a national park in 1973 and in 1984, UNESCO designated it a Natural World Heritage Site. Covering an area of 932 sq km., the park includes hilly areas of the Siwalik Range covered by deciduous Sal forest and the floodplains of the Narayani, Rapti, and the Reu Rivers, which are covered by dense tall elephant grass, interspersed with riverine forests of Silk Cotton

(Kapok), Acacia and Sisam trees. The park offers protection to 56 species of mammals including the one-horned rhinoceros, Bengal tiger, Gharial crocodile, leopard, sloth bear, wild elephant, striped hyena, Gangetic dolphin and wild bison. There are estimated to be 470 species of mammals, over 500 species of birds, 126 species of fish, 150 species of butterflies and 47 species of reptiles in the park. If we are lucky, we should at least see some rhino, crocodiles, deer, monkeys and many of the national park's bird and butterfly life.

Please note: Himalayan Quests does not support riding elephants for pleasure.



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### Day 13 (B L D)

#### Jungle safari activities

Today you will continue with your jungle safari activities getting deeper into the jungle and hopefully closer to Nepal's amazing wildlife.



## Day 14 (B)

### Flight to Kathmandu & UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Pashupatinath & Boudhanath

After breakfast you will bid farewell to Chitwan and its warmer climate as you transfer to Bharatpur airport for your short 25-minutes flight back to Kathmandu. If you are lucky, you will be blessed with amazing views of the whole of the Annapurna range from the left-hand side of the plane and a bird's eye view of the many terraces and villages that make up rural Nepal. Upon arrival back at your hotel, you will have time to settle in and make your own plans for lunch. After lunch you will head to the north east of the city for a guided tour of UNESCO World Heritage sites, Pashupatinath and Boudhanath.

Pashupatinath is not only Nepal's most important Hindu temple but also one of the most important Shiva temples on the Indian subcontinent. It is also Kathmandu's most important cremation site, with burning ghats lining the river bank alongside the temple.

Boudhanath is one of the most important religious and cultural centre for Nepal's considerable Tibetan in exile population and is one of the largest Buddhist Stupas in the world. The side streets surrounding the magnificent stupa are full of maroon-robed monks, gleaming monastery roofs, stalls selling yak butter lamps, shops selling the everyday paraphernalia of Buddhist worship and the low chant of monks at prayer.

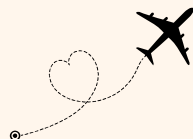


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### Day 15 (B)

#### Departure from Nepal

After breakfast, transfer to Tribhuvan International Airport for your flight home, concluding your immersive journey through Nepal.



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**MEALS INCLUDED: B - breakfast | L - lunch | D - dinner**

**This itinerary can be customised**

*The itinerary is a guide only and may change depending on conditions, group ability and local circumstances. Trekking timings include breaks and are approximate.*



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**Costs:**

**£1925 per person based on 2 pax**

**£1664 per person based on 4 pax**

**£1587 per person based on 6 pax**

**Single Supplement £298**

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### Tour cost includes:

- Pre-trip advice and briefing
- Airport transfers for international & domestic flights
- Domestic flight ticket Kathmandu - Pokhara & Bharatpur - Kathmandu
- All in country transportation in private vehicles
- 4 nights B&B hotel accommodation in KTM at [Hotel Nomad](#) or similar
- 1 night full board hotel accommodation in Nagarkot at [Nagarkot Farm House](#) or similar
- 3 nights B&B hotel accommodation in Pokhara at [Temple Tree Resort](#) or similar
- 3 nights full board accommodation in tea houses during the trek
- 1 night full board hotel accommodation in Bandipur at [Bandipur Village Inn](#) or similar
- 2 nights full board hotel accommodation in Chitwan at [Hotel Sapana Village Lodge](#) or similar
- Meals as outlined in the itinerary B:14, L:7, D:8
- Guided tours in Kathmandu Durbar Square, Swayambhunath Temple, Pashupatinath Temple & Boudhanath Stupa
- Tour in Pokhara - Boating across Fewa lake, Peace Stupa & Sarangkot cable car
- Tour in Chitwan - Jungle safari activities
- Necessary permits and entrance fees.
- Duffle bags for your trekking gear for the duration of the trek
- Insurance for our staff
- Group medical kit
- Government taxes



### Tour cost DOES NOT include:

- International flights to and from Kathmandu
  - Visas for Nepal (available on arrival)
  - Insurance
  - Meals unless specified in the itinerary
  - Personal expenses to include, but not limited to beverages, alcoholic drinks, gifts, laundry, snacks throughout the trip. Hot showers and battery charging during the trek
  - Sightseeing unless specified in the itinerary
  - Tips
  - Excess luggage fees for domestic flight
  - Charges incurred as a result of delays beyond the control of Himalayan Quests
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