



An Introduction to Trekking in the Himalayas

Mardi Himal Trek



Tour Length: 14 days

Trek difficulty: Easy/Moderate

Group size: 2 pax | Maximum: 10 pax

This fully supported teahouse trek is a wonderful introduction to the mountains of Nepal. It is a stunningly beautiful trek, taking you up through ancient rhododendron forests, to what feels like the face of the mountains themselves, as you get up close and personal with Annapurna South, Hinchuli, Machhapuchhre, Gangapurna, Annapurna I and Mardi Himal.

Situated just east of the Annapurna Base Camp trek, the Mardi Himal trek is a hidden gem. The trail winds along small paths through ancient rhododendron forests, until you climb out onto a high moorland at around 3,300m. Here, the landscape changes quite abruptly with amazing views of Mardi Himal, Machhapuchhre, Annapurna South and Hinchuli. From High Camp (3,580m) we rise early and walk to an amazing viewpoint for a spectacular sunrise.

Day 1 (D)

Arrival, informal welcome dinner

Arrive at Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu where you will be met by a member of our team for your transfer to your hotel. Settle in, relax, and join us later for an informal dinner.

Day 2 (B)

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

Today we will 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)

Fly to Pokhara, Phewa Lake & the Peace Pagoda

This morning will see us head to Pokhara on a short early morning flight. Once settled in to our hotel we will take a boat across Phewa Lake and slowly and steadily make our way up hill to the Peace Pagoda. If the weather is clear we will be afforded the most magnificent views Phewa Lake and the Annapurana range spread out before us. We will then head back by bus to the hotel, and the rest of the day will be yours to explore as you wish.

The lakeside city of Pokhara is the gateway to the Annapurnas and often the start and end point for treks in this region. Lakeside is the tourist area, located on the banks of Phewa Lake, with, on a clear day, amazing views of the Annapurna Massif, the Peace Pagoda that looks down over the city and of course, the lake itself. Pokhara has a wonderful laid-back vibe and offers a host of different adventure activities, such as paragliding, rafting, white water kayaking, zip lining and stand-up paddle boarding. For those not looking for an adrenaline fix there are plenty of other options such as yoga, massage, museums, temples, shopping, boating on the lake or taking a gentle stroll along the banks of the lake itself. Lakeside is also a mecca for foodies with cuisine from around the world available at its many cafes, restaurants, bars and clubs.



Day 4 (B L D)

Trek Kande - Pitam Deurali (6 km, c.3-4 hours, 2,100 m)

After an early breakfast we will drive to the trail head at Kande (approx. 45 mins) where we will meet our porter team. Once loaded up and organised we will begin our trek with a steep climb through the jungle, passing local villages until we reach Australian Camp, our lunch stop. If the weather is clear, we will be able to see magnificent views of the Annapurna Mountain range while we eat our lunch. A gentle incline after lunch brings us to Pitam Deurali and our teahouse where we will stay for the night. We will hold a quick briefing before dinner to outline tomorrow's plan, answer any questions and of course, check that everyone is happy and enjoying themselves.



Day 5 (B L D)

Trek Pitam Deurali - Forest Camp (8.3 km, c.4-5 hours 2,520m)

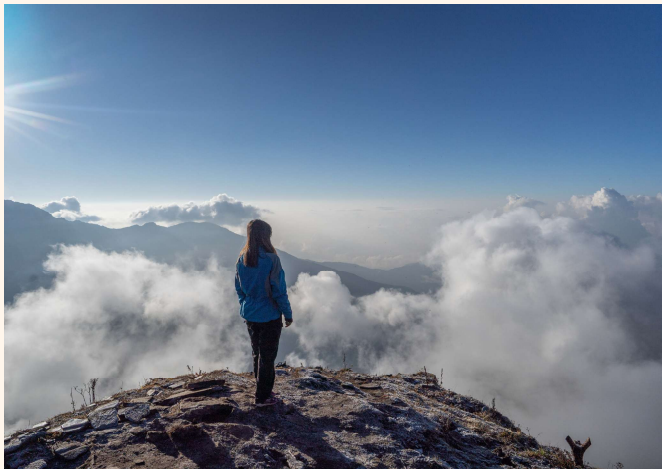
After a hearty breakfast we will head on up to our next stop, Forest Camp. It's uphill for most of the day taking us through thick jungle with beautiful views of the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna ranges. We will take it slowly and steadily, ensuring there is time to take in the magic of where we are, and if we are lucky, we may catch glimpses of some of the region's abundant wildlife, such as deer, monkeys and the many species of birds that all live in this dense jungle. We reach Forest Camp and our teahouse for the night in the afternoon. As for every evening during the tour, before dinner we will hold a check-in and briefing session.



Day 6 (B L D)

Trek Forest Camp - Badal Dada (5.1km, c.4-5 hours, 3,210 m)

Today is a short distance but a steep climb through an ancient rhododendron and juniper forest. As you reach the top, your hard work will be rewarded with the most breath-taking views of Machhapuchhre (Fishtail Mountain). We should arrive at our teahouse in time for lunch, and you can spend the afternoon as you wish - taking in the view, exploring the local vicinity, snoozing in the afternoon sun with a book, or hanging out with the group playing cards - the choice is yours. Prior to dinner there will be the next day briefing and check-in.



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Day 8 (B L D)

Trek High Camp - View Point (3.8 km, c.4.5 hours round trip, 4,200 m)

Today will start with an early wakeup call so you can appreciate the most spectacular sunrise view over the mighty Himalayas. After a quick hot drink, we start the climb to the view point by torchlight in the dark, with the aim of arriving at the highest elevation on this trek, 4,200m in time to witness sunrise over the peak of Mardi Himal. Today, if the weather is clear you will get to see up close Annapurna I (8,091m), Annapurna South, Hiunchuli, Gangapurna, Tare Kang, Khangsar, Annapurna III and Fish Tail. Once the sun is up, we will head back down to our teahouse to warm up, eat breakfast, compare photos and spend the rest of the day getting ready for the big descent on what will be our last full day.





Day 9 (B L D)

Trek High Camp - Siding Village (8.2 km, c.5-7 hours, 1,850 m)

What goes up, must come down and today is the day we make the long, steep descent back to lower elevation. After breakfast, we will retrace our steps back down to Low Camp for lunch and then head southeast from the ridge through the dense forest towards the Mardi Khola and Siding, our final stop on the trek. Trekking poles are a must for today to help your knees stay healthy and maintain your balance on the path down. Once we reach Siding it's time to celebrate our achievement and our amazing crew.



Day 10 (B)

Drive Siding village to Pokhara (14 km, c.2-3 hours)

Today we will travel by jeep back to Pokhara and the comforts of a hot shower, comfy bed and some clean clothes. We will be back in Pokhara in time for lunch and you will have free time to explore, go paragliding, have a massage, spend time on the lake, shop, or just cruise your way through the many restaurants and bars that offer up a huge range of different cuisines.



Day 11 (B L D)

Private transfer to Chitwan National Park (159 km, c.5-6 hours, 100 m) & jungle safari activities

As with all travel days, it's another early start as we head to the south of the country and the lush jungles of Chitwan National Park. We aim to arrive in Chitwan in time for lunch, and once everyone is settled in and fed, we will begin our 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 Chitwan Doon, or 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.

Once settled in we will begin our jungle safari activities, such as a jeep safari, canoe ride, bird watching, jungle walk, sunrise walk with elephants and cultural show.

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



Day 12 (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 13 (B)

Flight to Kathmandu & UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Pashupatinath & Boudhanath

After breakfast we will bid farewell to Chitwan and its warmer climate as we transfer by bus to the local airport for our short 25-minute flight back to Kathmandu. If we are lucky, we 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 our hotel, you will have time to settle in and make your own plans for lunch. After lunch we will head to the north east of the city for a guided tour of UNESCO World Heritage sites, Pashupatinath and Boudhanath. Upon completing our tours we'll dine out for our last meal together at a roof top restaurant overlooking the Boudhanath stupa.

Pashupatinath is not only Nepal's most important Hindu temple but also one of the most important Shiva temples on the Indian subcontinent. Standing on the banks of the holy Bagmati River to the east of the city, Pashupatinath draws devotees and sadhus, or holy men from all over Nepal and India and sees hundreds of thousands of pilgrims flock to the banks of the river each year to celebrate Shiva's birthday during the festival of Maha Shivaratri. Pashupatinath is also Kathmandu's most important cremation site, with burning ghats lining the river bank alongside the temple and is one of the Kathmandu Valley's 7 UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Boudhanath is the religious and cultural centre for Nepal's considerable Tibetan in exile population and home to 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

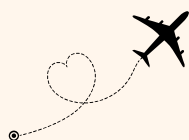
everyday paraphernalia of Buddhist worship and the low chant of monks at prayer. Best visited either early morning or late afternoon, just as dusk is falling, it is a spectacle in itself to watch the local community of all ages, turn out to circumambulate the stupa in a clockwise direction, turning their prayer wheels and gently chanting their mantras.



Day 14 (B)

Depart Nepal

Today is the day when we have to say our last goodbyes, as your airport transfer will whisk you away to catch your plane home.



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

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



Costs:

£1626 per person based on 2 pax

£1466 per person based on 4 pax

£1446 per person based on 6 pax

Single Supplement £196



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
- 3 nights B&B hotel accommodation in KTM at [Hotel Nomad](#) or similar
- 2 nights B&B hotel accommodation in Pokhara at [Temple Tree Resort](#) or similar
- 2 nights full board hotel accommodation in Chitwan at [Hotel Sapana Village Lodge](#) or similar
- 6 nights full board accommodation in tea houses during the trek
- Meals as outlined in the itinerary B:13, L:8, D:9
- Guided tours of Kathmandu Durbar Square, Swayambhunath, Pashupatinath Temple, Boudhanath Stupa
- 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 (insurance to include evacuation is mandatory to a maximum elevation of 4,200m View Point)
 - 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
 - Excess luggage fee for domestic flights
 - Tips
 - Charges incurred as a result of delays beyond the control of Himalayan Quests
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