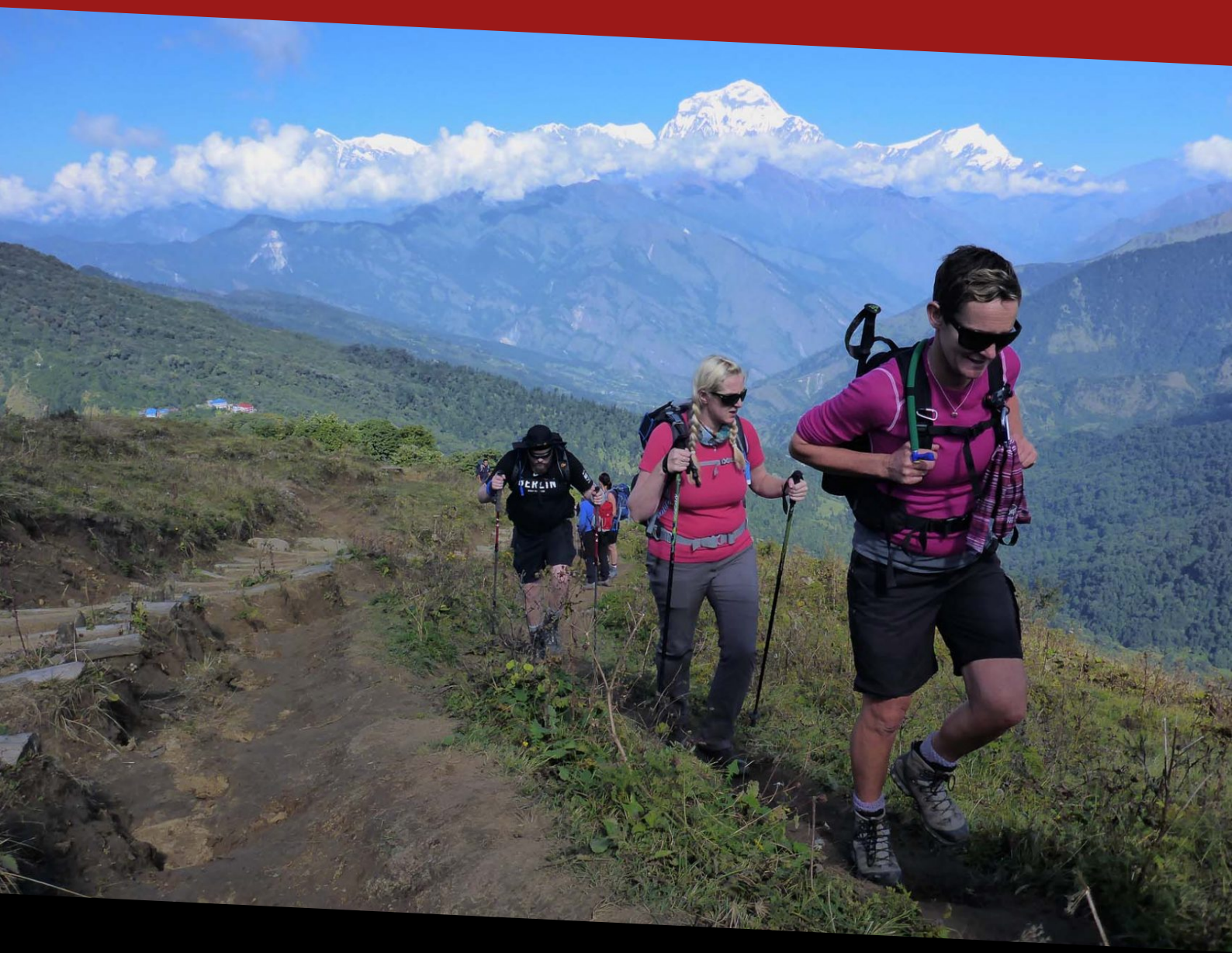
Annapurna Base Camp

Nepal | 4,130m



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Experience the enthralling magic of **Nepal** on this famous trek to the heart of the **Annapurna** region and learn why trekkers can never settle for a single visit. Well known to many legendary climbers the trek to **Annapurna sanctuary** and **basecamp** is an unsurpassed **introduction to Himalayan adventure**, giving you glimpses of 3 of the world's 10 highest mountains.

You're plunged into the experience in the bustling beauty of **Pokhara** city by the stunning **Phewa Lake**. From there you'll trek through traditional villages that have changed little since the first European explorers first entered Nepal. Next, you climb through ancient oak and rhododendron forest, cross raging rivers and pass thundering waterfalls. Towering perilously high above the group throughout are the Himalayas. The iconic **Fishtail Peak**, Annapurna, **Dhaulagiri** and many of their spectacular neighbour's reign over this enchanting landscape. These peaks were once deemed the greatest challenge in the Himalayas, and they offer an adventure unlike anywhere else on earth. Now it's your turn to feel for yourself their unique magic.

Fully supported all the way, you're in the experienced hands of a Western guide and Sherpa team. To catch a glimpse into the lives of our Nepali hosts, you'll stay in local tea houses where you'll be assured a warm welcome every time.

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Physical - P2

This trip is challenging and a good solid fitness level is required. There will be prolonged walking over varied terrain and you should be training to comfortably walk for 6 to 8 hours, over undulating terrain, with a few punchy uphill climbs, carrying a pack up to 6kg in weight.

Technical - T2

Consider this a trek, although there may be occasion to use hands for short sections of easy scrambling. No previous climbing or trekking experience is necessary.

Please note that the grading system used is a rough guide only.

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ITINERARY

DAY 1 : Depart UK

We meet our 360 leader at Heathrow airport for team introductions and to check onto our overnight flight to Nepal.

DAY 2 : Arrive Kathmandu

Arrive Kathmandu mid afternoon and transfer to hotel before soaking up some local colour. Regroup in the evening for a full 360 brief and kit check.

DAY 3 : Pokhara - Tikhe Dhunga (1,540m)

We start with an early morning flight to Pokhara over the backbone of the Himalayas. We then transfer by road to Nayapul where we start our trek. The trail follows bamboo forests and passes thundering waterfalls. We stop for lunch at the small village of Sudame. After lunch the trail climbs steadily up to Hile, before arriving at Tikhe Dhunga, staying overnight in a guest house.

DAY 4 : Tikhe Dhunga - Ghorepani (2,775m)

From Tikhe Dhunga the trail ascends to Ulleri village up a long series of stone steps, we then have a gentle climb through pasture and cultivated fields before we reach refreshingly cool oak and rhododendron forests. We have lunch at Nangethanti before ascending to Ghorepani, today's final destination.

DAY 5 : Ghorepani - Poon Hill (3,193m) - Tadapani (2,540m)

We start early and get to Poon Hill for sunrise, one of the best Himalayan viewpoints in Nepal. Below us lie vivid green pastures and forests. We walk down to Ghorepani for breakfast and then trek up to the Deurali pass for a spectacular panorama over Dhaulagiri and the Annapurna. The trail descends steeply through dense moss-covered forest rich with bird life to Tadapani which provides you with a viewpoint from which sunsets are nothing short of staggering. Overnight at a guest house.

DAY 6 : Tadapani - Chhomrong (2,040m)

The trail drops down from Tadapani, through dense rhododendron forest. A short day as we overnight at Chhomrong that will again give spectacular views of the towering peaks of Annapurna

DAY 7 : Chhomrong - Himalaya Hotel

Today will be one of the toughest days on this trek, we start our day with the local villagers heading to school and the fields but as the terrain begins to get steeper we enter the untouched forest of Kuldighar, a blend of ancient oak and cloud forest. We finish in the village of Dovan and the Himalaya Hotel where we spend the night.

DAY 8 : Himalaya Hotel - Machapuchare Base Camp

A mostly gentle path with a few short steep sections takes us to the Modi Khola valley whose steep walls reach immense heights above us. We leave the forest for alpine pastures and stop for lunch at Deorali. From here we climb the moraine that forms the glacial bowl of the Annapurna glacier. Tonight we stay in a tea house under the huge west face of Machapuchare.

DAY 9 : Machapuchure Base Camp - Annapurna Base Camp (4,130m) - Himalaya Hotel

We wake up to stunning views of the Modi Khola valley below us and the dramatic west face of Machapuchare above us. But our day only gets better as we enter the immense cirque of towering peaks that create the Annapurna Sanctuary. It takes around 3 hours to reach Annapurna Base Camp where we are rewarded for our efforts with an unsurpassable 360 vista of legendary Himalayan mountains. Here we spend a few hours soaking up the panorama before us. In the afternoon we descend back past our tea house from last night to the Himalaya Hotel.

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ITINERARY

DAY 10 : Himalaya Hotel - Chhomrong Village

Today the trail gradually drops all the way down to Chhomrong Village through Dovan. We spend the night at a guest house, where we'll have a beer to reward our achievements so far.

DAY 11 : Chhomrong Village - Ghandruk

From Chhomrong about an hour of walking will take us to Jhinu Danda where we can enjoy a relaxing dip at the natural hot spring before retiring to our guest house for the night.

DAY 12 : Ghanruk - Pothana

After breakfast the trail continues on to Landruk, a beautiful Gurung village that gives us an excellent view of the surrounding mountain ranges. The trail emerges in the main Modi Khola valley and reaches Tolkha. After that we will continue on to Pothana to spend the night.

DAY 13 : Pothana - Pokhara

Today we walk along a paved stone trail back through rhododendron to Dhampus. After a rest here we walk mostly downhill through fields to the forest and on to Phedi. From Phedi we pick up the vehicles for our drive to Pokhara. During the afternoon we can go boating on Phewa lake and explore Pokhara before heading out for fantastic a Nepalese dinner to celebrate our amazing achievement.

DAY 14 : Flight to Kathmandu

After our 30 minute flight to Kathmandu we have some time to explore this fascinating city. In the evening, we will head out for a 3-course celebration meal at the Roadhouse.

DAY 15 : Return to UK

Day flight back to the UK.

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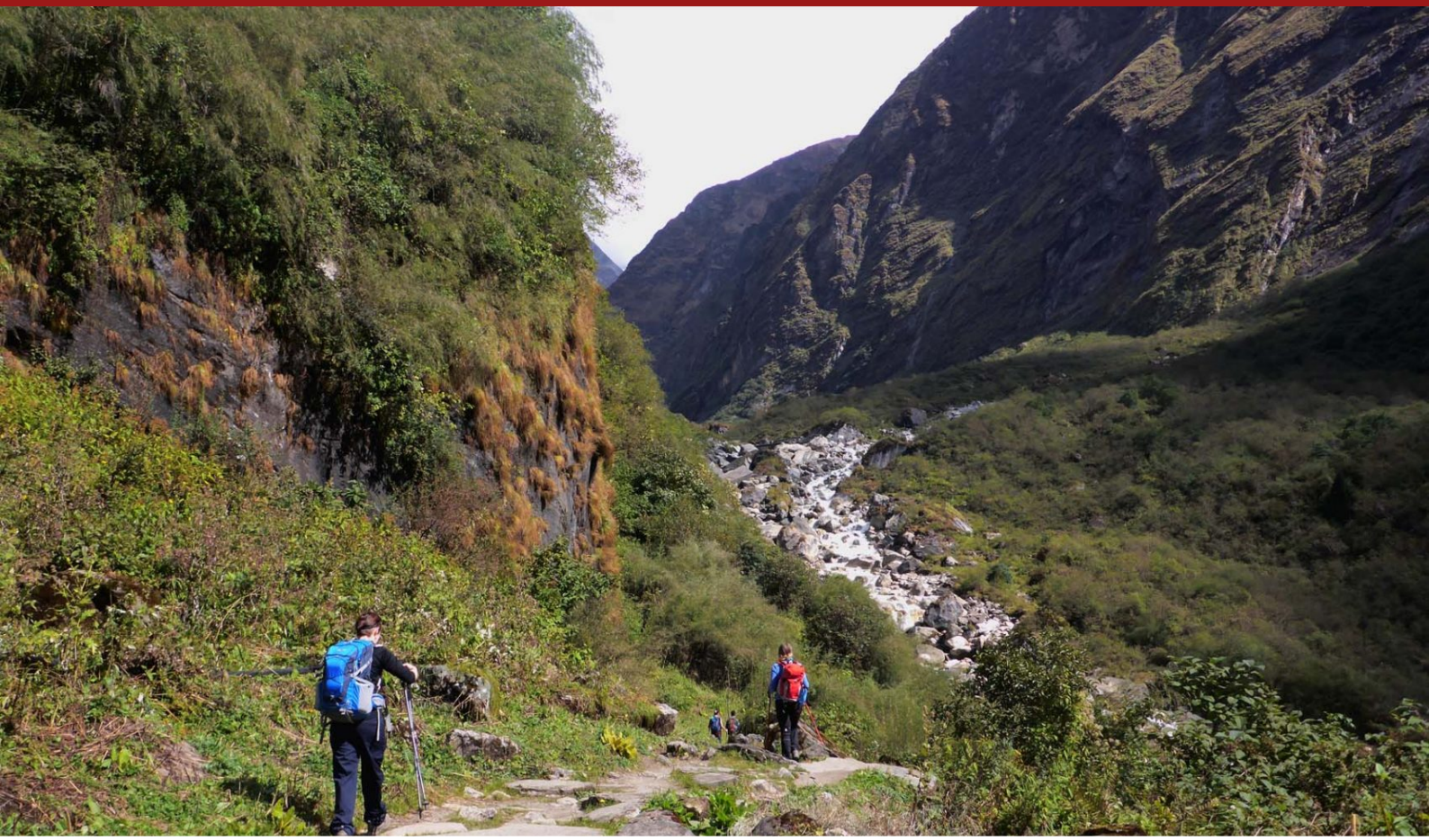

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KIT LIST

Bags & Packs

Duffel bag 120ltr-140ltr

A 120-140L duffel bag to transport kit. A duffel bag is a strong, soft, weather resistant bag without wheels but with functional straps for carrying. Suitcases and wheeled bags are not suitable

Daysack

Approx. 40L capacity. Your day to day pack that you carry with your daily essentials, fitted with shoulder straps and importantly a waist belt

Waterproof rucksack cover

To protect rucksack from rain

Drybags

Nylon rolltop bags that keep fresh clothing and other important items like passports and iPods dry in the event of a total downpour that seeps into your kitbag. Good for quarantining old socks. Please note that many countries are now banning plastic bags. We would always advise buying re-usable nylon rolltop bags for keeping your kit dry (and sustainability).

Small kit bag or light bag

This is for any kit you intend to leave at the hotel and could even simply be a heavy duty plastic bag

Padlocks x 2

For use on your kit bag for travel and on the expedition plus your hotel bag

Sleeping Gear

4 Season sleeping bag

You should get a sleeping bag rated to -15C and choose a sleeping bag that functions within the comfort rating of this temperature. A silk sleeping bag liner will enhance this rating on the coldest nights

Sleeping bag liner

Silk is best for keeping the bag clean and you a little warmer

Sleeping mat

A full length self-inflating rather than ¾ length Thermarest

Headwear

Warm headgear x 2

This can be a warm hat, beanie, balaclava, anything to reduce the heat loss from your head

Wide brimmed hat

Keeps the sun off exposed areas like ears and the nape of the neck

Buff/Scarf

Essential for protection from the sun and dust

Sunglasses

Worth spending money on good UV filters. Category 4 wrap around style are essential due to the strength of UV rays at altitude. Julbo is our preferred supplier

Annapurna Base Camp

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KIT LIST

Sunblock

Buy the highest SPF you can find as UV intensifies with altitude

Lip salve

Sun cream will not work on your lips and they are very susceptible to burn without proper protection

Upper Body

Base layer x 2

This is the layer closest to the skin and its principal function is to draw (wick) moisture and sweat away from the skin. You can also get thermal base layers for use at higher altitudes that provide an additional insulative layer while still drawing sweat during times of high exertion

Mid layer x 2

These are typically lightweight microfleeces or similar technology that provide varying degrees of warmth and insulation without being overly bulky or heavy to pack

T-shirt (optional)

A light weight trekking T shirt is advisable for this expedition as some of the days can be hot

Gilet (optional)

Optional - A great low volume additional layer to keep your core warm, whether down, primaloft or fleece

Light insulated jacket

A lighter jacket such as a Primaloft or lightweight down which can be worn at lower to mid altitudes is a great addition to your kit offering greater flexibility with layering

Soft Shell (optional)

Optional - These should be windproof (not all are) and insulative. They are mostly made of soft polyester and sometimes resemble a neoprene finish which makes them very mobile and comfortable to wear. While offering a degree of weather repellence, they are not waterproof

Hard Shell

These jackets are thin, highly waterproof and windproof and worn over all other items of clothing. You'll find these made of Gore-Tex or other proprietary waterproof yet breathable technology. Inexpensive hard shells that aren't breathable will prevent evaporation, making you sweat intensely and are not recommended

Down jacket

A super jacket that will keep you warm down to around -10C with a couple of layers underneath. Our guides usually wear a lighter down or Primaloft jacket under their down jackets for greater layering flexibility. A loft rating of around 650 is ideal

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KIT LIST

Warm gloves

Consider liners or a light polartec pair for lower altitudes and evenings, and a thicker waterproof pair like ski gloves for higher altitudes

Waterproof mitts

A great addition to fit over your down mitts high up or gloves lower down for an added windproof layer

Lower Body

Trekking trousers x 2

These tend to be polyester so they dry quickly after a shower and weigh little in your pack. Consider a lighter pair for lower down (perhaps with detachable lower legs as an alternative to shorts), and a Schoeffel fabric or similar which is warmer and wind resistant for higher altitudes depending on the weather. You can layer with thermal leggings if necessary

Shorts (optional)

Light weight shorts are advisable for this expedition as some of the days can be hot. Zip off trekking trousers are the most versatile. Consider buying this

Waterproof overtrousers

Like the jacket, an essential piece of kit to stay dry and should also be Goretex

Long Johns

Thermal insulation for the lower body

Underwear

Merino or wicking material, not cotton. How many pairs you take is entirely up to you

Feet

Walking boots

Well worn in 4 season waterproof boots with mid to high ankle support

Comfortable trainers

For evening use and to give your feet a break once we reach the lodges

Trekking socks x 4

Start with lighter socks lower down, working up to thicker pairs for higher up as it gets colder. Some people like a clean pair every day, others are happy to change every other day – that's a personal choice

Spare laces

Just in case

Hydration

Water bottles/bladder

3L equivalent – Camelbaks are useful at lower altitudes but have a tendency to freeze up at higher altitudes without insulation tubes, Nalgene bottles are better at altitude. We suggest a combination of a 2L bladder and 1L bottle or 2 x ½L bottles to put in your jacket for summit night

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KIT LIST

Water purification

Although generally all water is boiled some prefer to double up and add purification tabs as well. Always good to have in your bag

Toiletries

Wash kit

Keep it simple on the mountain. Essentials are toothbrush, toothpaste and deodorant. Moisturiser is advisable, everything else is a luxury!

Travel towel

Travel towels from the likes of Lifesystems are perfect

Wet wipes

Preferably biodegradable, these are great for washing when modern shower facilities become a thing of the past

Alcohol gel

A must have for good camp hygiene

Insect repellent

For early stages and once back down

Toilet paper

Provided on the mountain but a spare in your daysack may be useful if you need to hide behind a rock between lodges

Nappy sacks or dog poo bags

Only needed to bag your toilet paper if you are caught short in between lodges and for keeping your rubbish tidy

Medications

Personal first aid kit

The 360 med kits are designed to be used in emergencies and akin to an A&E rather than a pharmacy on Expeditions so please come prepared with useful meds for yourself such as painkillers (Ibuprofen if you can take it and a Paracetamol) plus blister plasters, plasters, antiseptic, rehydration sachets and any muscle rubs you wish to use.

Personal medication

Keep this in your daysack

Miscellaneous

Head torch

We recommend Petzl head torches. Bring spare batteries.

Trekking poles

These tend to be a personal preference but help with your stability and can dampen the pressure on the knees coming down hill

Camera

Limited facilities to recharge at a cost in each teahouse so bring spare batteries too

Penknife (optional)

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KIT LIST

Sewing kit (optional)

Snacks

You will be fed very well and given snacks each day however we advise bringing a small selection as a little bit of comfort. Extra snacks can be bought en-route if needed. Energy gels and protein bars are not suitable

Entertainment

Of course optional, but most trekkers like to bring an iPod, book, Kindle, cards etc for evening entertainment.

Documentation

Passport

Don't forget this! Your passport should have at least 6 months validity. With your passport expiry date at least six months after the final day of travel.

Copy of passport

Just in case

Passport photos x 4

We need these to obtain your climbing and trekking permits

Visa

A visa can either be obtained from the Nepalese Embassy in London or on arrival at Kathmandu airport. Costs are: 30 days - $40 and 90 days - $100. Non UK residents should check with the Nepalese Embassy

Dental check up

We recommend you have a dental check-up before your trip. New fillings can be an issue at altitude if there is an air pocket left in the gap

Vaccinations

Check with your travel clinic or the nurse at your GP surgery

Money

We recommend you take at least US$200-$300 onto the mountain in small denominations. This will allow for c. $160 tip money plus any extras such as satellite phone calls and emergency funds. Small denominations are recommended as it may be difficult to obtain change and it will be easier to divide tip money

Travel insurance

Copy of own travel insurance details. And relevant contact numbers. We have a partnership with True Traveller and would recommend that you contact them when looking for travel insurance for your trip with 360. However, it is vital that you ensure that the insurance cover they offer is suitable for you, taking your personal circumstances (items to be insured, cancellation cover, medical history) into account. Many other insurance providers are available and we do recommend that you shop around to get the best cover for you on the expedition you are undertaking. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

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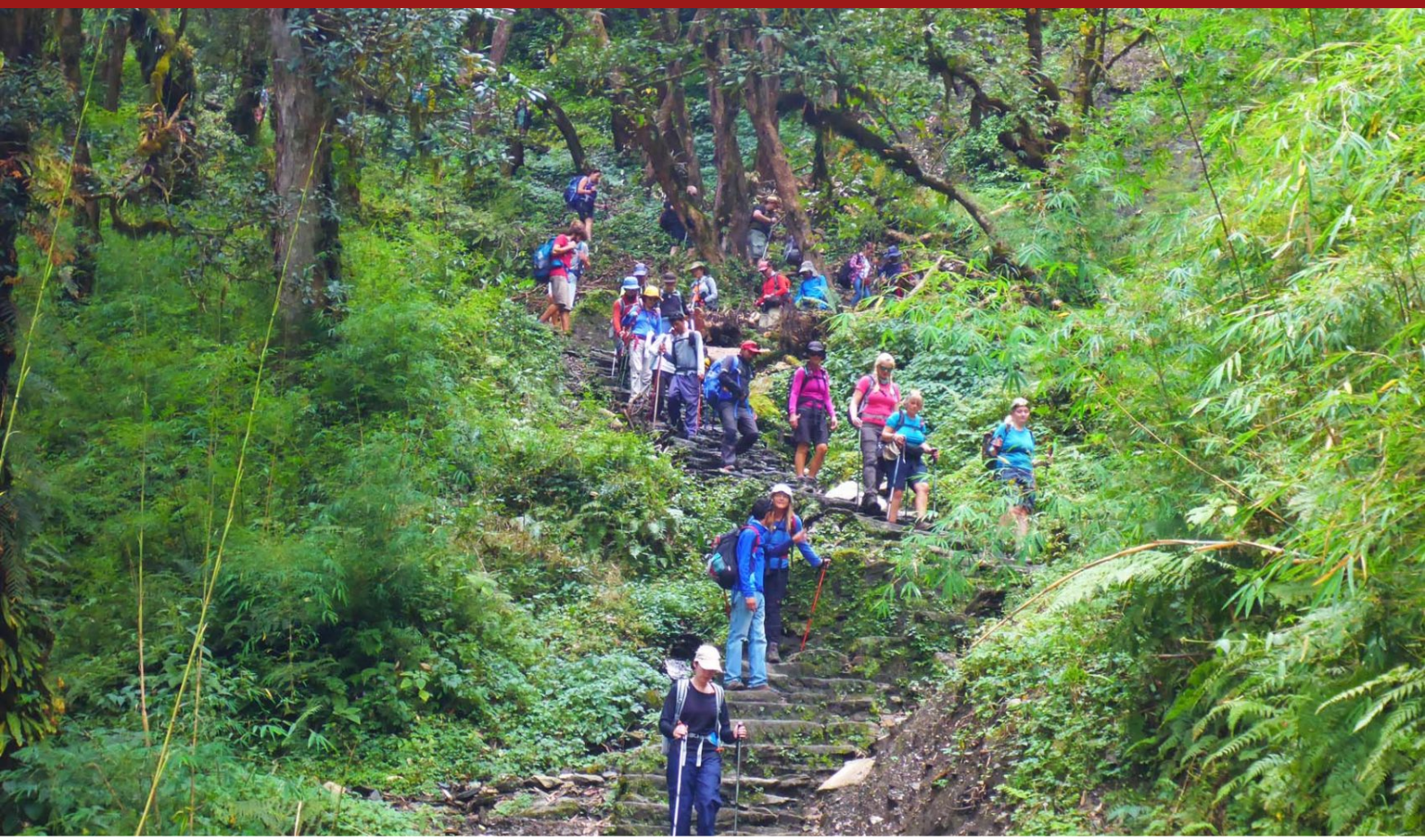

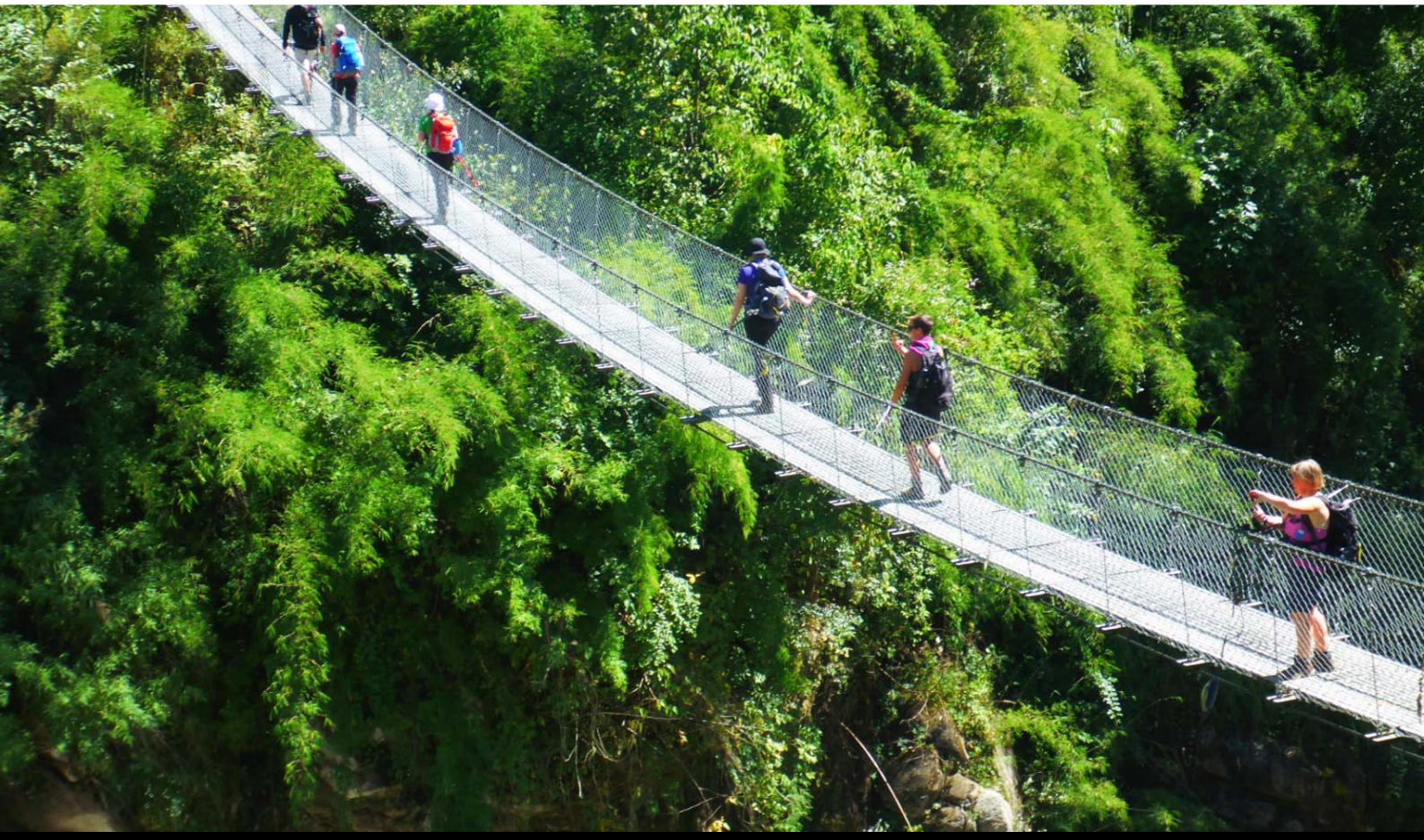

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FAQ'S

Country

What information can you give on Nepal?

Nepal, officially the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, is located in the Himalayas with a population of approximately 27 million. Bordered to the north by the China, and to the south, east, and west by India and across the Himalayas lies the Tibet.

A monarchy throughout most of its history, Nepal was ruled by the Shah dynasty of kings from 1768, when Prithvi Narayan Shah unified its many small kingdoms. However, a decade-long Civil War by the Communist Party of Nepal and several weeks of mass protests by all major political parties led to elections for a constituent assembly in May 2008 which overwhelmingly favoured the abdication of the Nepali monarch Gyanendra Shah and the establishment of a federal multiparty representative democratic republic.

Kathmandu is the nation's capital and the country's largest city. Kathmandu Valley itself has an estimated population of 5 million.

Nepal has a rich geography: the mountainous north has eight of the world's ten tallest mountains, including the highest point on Earth, Mount Everest, called Sagarmatha in Nepali. It contains more than 240 peaks over 6,096 m above sea level. The fertile and humid south is heavily urbanised.

How would you describe the Sherpa people

The Sherpa people are the predominant ethnic group living in the eastern Himalayan region of Nepal. In 2001 there were approximately 150,000 sherpas in Nepal. Their language is a variant of Tibetan. Sherpas belong to the Nyingmapa, the "Red Hat Sect" of Tibetan Buddhism. Allegedly the oldest Buddhist sect in Tibet, it emphasizes mysticism and local deities shared by the pre-Buddhist Bon religion, which has shamanic elements, in addition to Buddha and the great Buddhist divinities, the Sherpa also have believe in numerous gods and demons who are believed to inhabit every mountain, cave, and forest. These have to be worshiped or appeased through ancient practices that have been woven into the fabric of Buddhist ritual life. Indeed, it is almost impossible to distinguish between Bon practices and Buddhism.

Sherpas are highly regarded as elite mountaineers. They were immeasurably valuable to early explorers of the Himalayas, serving as guides at the extreme altitudes of the peaks and passes in the region, particularly for expeditions to climb Mt. Everest. Today, Sherpa is a term often used casually to refer to almost any guide or porter hired for mountaineering expeditions in the Himalayas. Sherpas are renowned in the international climbing and mountaineering community for their hardiness, expertise, and experience at high altitudes. It has been speculated that a portion of the Sherpas' climbing ability is the result of a genetic adaptation to living in high altitudes.

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FAQ'S

What is the climate in Nepal?

Daytime temperatures in Kathmandu will be warm and can reach as high as over 30°C. On trek the daytime temperatures can warm to over 20°C when the sun is out. At higher elevations, if there is little sun or during evening, temperatures plunge well below freezing.

What is the currency?

Nepalese Rupee – this can only be obtained in Nepal. Currency equivalent to approximately £300 should be sufficient for the duration of your stay in Nepal. This will include enough to cover tips for the whole tripand should be brought in US Dollars or a mixture of USD and Pound Sterling.

Any advice on tipping?

Although not obligatory tipping has become ingrained in the culture, and once you see how hard the Sherpa work for you for such a small amount of money relative to your own UK salaries, these will be much appreciated. As a guide we recommend tipping around $160 for the local staff and whatever you feel for the 360 Leader. A good leader can have a huge impact on the success and enjoyment of an expedition.

What is the local time?

GMT + 5 hours 45 mins

Food and Water

What is the food like on the mountain?

We stay in lodges known locally as tea houses and these have basic kitchens. Apart from generators there is no electricity in the Annapurna region and the food is usually cooked on big stoves and ovens fuelled by wood or yak dung. Despite this the range of food produced is fantastic and the menus are very comprehensive. The majority of the meals focus on fuelling the hungry trekker by providing plenty of carbohydrates. Pastas, rice based dishes, spring rolls and pizzas are the staples.

Every single ingredient is brought up either on a yak or by a porter and as such the menus get a little simpler as you get to the higher lodges. Most of our midday meals are also eaten at trailside restaurants and are usually accompanied by a hot drink or two. On top of well-balanced meals You are provided with coffee, tea and snacks upon arrival into the lodge and at all mealtimes.

You are invited to bring along any of their favourite snacks and goodie bags from home as buying additional snacks from the lodges can be expensive. Concentrate on high energy food-stuffs such as Jelly Babies to give you that little boost on an arduous day.

I have food allergies, can these be catered for?

Absolutely, please inform the office of any allergies or intolerances and we will ensure that these are taken into account on the trek.

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FAQ'S

Where does the drinking water come from?

For the first days bottled drinking water will be used. At the higher lodges we will use locally sourced drinking water from streams or springs. These are usually fresh being topped up from melt water above or by rainfall but we also increase its purity by treating the water with purification tablets and by boiling it. We always ensure that our drinking water is 100% bug free.

How often is fresh water available for replenishing during the day?

Before leaving the lodge in the morning you will fill your water bottles or camel bladder. If this runs low you will have ample more water to replace it with. For most walking days water can be replenished at the lunch time site.

Accommodation

What kind of accommodation is there on the trek?

The teahouses vary in their quality and style depending on their location. Generally they have a communal room downstairs, with one or two bed bedrooms above them. Some have shower facilities, some will just have a stand pipe, and there are shared toilet facilities. They use a type of wood burning stove in the main communal area. Other rooms are generally unheated.

There are no facilities for changing money in the teahouses. We recommend that you organise sufficient cash Kathmandu, your local guide can advise on this.

There is electricity in many of the teahouses at lower altitudes, but not when you get higher and the teahouses become more basic. A top tip for making your batteries last a little longer is to put them in the inside pocket of your coat or under your pillow at night. Cooler temperatures drain battery life so keeping them warm will ensure they last longer!

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FAQ'S

Will I have my own room?

Most altitude related symptoms manifest themselves at night. We therefore recommend room sharing from the onset of all expeditions. Room share is organised according to sex and where possible age groups. Obviously if you are climbing this mountain with a friend or partner then share rooms with them. If you have joined the team by yourself then it is highly likely that you will be sharing a room with your pre-assigned room buddy unless prior arrangements have been made.

Health and Safety

What happens if there is a problem on the mountain?

All our guides are in communication with each other by phone and radio. In the vast majority of cases of emergency rescue the problems can be attributed to altitude and so the solution is immediate descent to lower altitudes. Our local mountain crew are all experienced in dealing with any problem that will arise. Our guides are either doctors or qualified with the highest standard of wilderness first aid qualifications and can handle an emergency to the highest level of competency, in the vast majority of cases without national park assistance.

Am I likely to suffer from altitude sickness on this expedition?

There are different types of altitude sickness. Although our acclimatisation regime ensures that everybody enjoys the best possible chance of getting high on the mountain, altitude related problems can happen. The most common of this is high altitude sickness (AMS – Acute Mountain Sickness).
Symptoms for this can include headaches, nausea and vomiting.

This sounds quite dramatic but generally this is just the process your body naturally goes through to adjust to the higher altitudes and the reduced partial pressure of the atmosphere. For some people the acclimatisation process takes a little longer than others. For our guides this is all part and parcel of ascending to 4,000m and, although we assess each client's personal situation carefully, we also further consider the compounding effects of dehydration brought on by excessive vomiting and loss of appetite.

AMS might sound frightening but our guides are fully trained (and highly experienced) in helping relieve your personal symptoms and providing advice on how to best proceed.

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FAQ'S

What can I do to help prevent AMS?

In most cases AMS can be avoided by the following: drink plenty of water, walk slowly, stay warm and eat well – and listen and talk to your guides.
We recommend that you familiarise yourself with the various effects that altitude can cause. During your pre-climb briefing, we will describe altitude sickness to you in detail, and advise you how to cope with it.

The most important thing is not to fear it, but to respect it and to know how to deal with it and more importantly tell your guides how you feel. Our guides have seen every condition that the mountain produces, and they will always know how to deal with problems.

Is there a risk of getting HACE (High Altitude Cerebral Edema) and HAPE (High Altitude Pulmonary Edema) on the mountain?

HACE and HAPE rarely occur on the Annapurna Base Camp trek but our guides are fully trained in the recognition of the onset of these problems and will deal with them at the first sign of their development.

Should I bring Diamox on the expedition with me?

We recommend you come armed with a course of Diamox on this expedition, though we do not recommend that take you these as a prophylactic during the trek or climb. We view Diamox as a treatment drug rather than a preventative medicine. Most adventure medics give similar advice, however we do appreciate this can be confusing, as many GPs (who aren't necessarily mountaineers) do suggest taking it as a prophylactic.

Here at 360 we pride ourselves on designing all our itineraries with acclimatisation front and centre and this expedition has been carefully designed to allow for your body to adjust to the altitude gradually, safely and comfortably. However, if you find that you are still having problems adjusting to the altitude (see our FAQ on Altitude Sickness) then your expedition leader or medic will recommend the correct course of action regarding taking Diamox.

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FAQ'S

Should I take Diamox?

It is far preferable to take Diamox if and when needed during the course of the expedition. If you are already taking it and then start having altitude related problems you are left with few options but to descend to a more comfortable altitude which sadly often means that the summit is not attainable.

Furthermore, Diamox is a diuretic, meaning you will have to drink a lot of fluid to prevent dehydration. Of course, the upshot of this is you'll have to pee more which means you'll probably be having to get up more in the night and take cover behind rocks during the day. Another quite common side-effect is that it can cause your extremities to "buzz and tingle" including your fingers, toes and lips which can feel quite unsettling. Other side-effects can include dizziness and light headedness with loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. Although all these side-effects are manageable when you have symptoms of altitude sickness, we personally believe it is counter-intuitive to take it unless necessary.

Of course, it is totally up to you, this is just our recommendation and we're not doctors. If you do decide to take Diamox on the advice of your doctor then please do let your leader know in situ so they are aware of this. We also suggest you take the drug for a couple of days a few weeks before travelling so you can experience the symptoms before taking them during the trek.

Do I need to take Malarial drugs?

The Malaria protozoa generally does not survive over an altitude of 1,500m so Malaria should pose no threat. We recommend that you visit your doctor or travel clinic before departure to get the latest advice.

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FAQ'S

You advocate taking a small first aid kit, what should it have in it?

We advocate a little bit of self-help on the mountain. If you have a blister developing for example then please stop take of your boot and treat it before it becomes a problem.

Your own first aid kit should contain:

A basic blister kit, antiseptic, plasters, sun-protection, your own personal medication (sometimes your porter might get to camp after you and if he is carrying your medication you may not be able to take it according to the regime you are used to), basic pain relief (aspirin and Ibuprofen), a personal course of antibiotics if prone to illness. Foot powder in your socks every morning is great for preventing blisters.

Generally the best approach to take when packing your first aid kit is to include such basic medications as if you would on a family or personal holiday.

Your 360 expedition leader and / or a local porter (we call the ambulance man!) carries a very comprehensive first aid kit which contains a wide range of supplies and medications. They are fully trained to use whatever is needed for any emergency that may arise. We advocate keeping this in mind when packing your own first aid supplies and keeping your own First Aid kit as compact and light as possible.

What vaccinations do I need?

The following vaccinations are recommended:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid
- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Polio

This list is not absolute and it is important you should see your GP Surgery or travel clinic for latest recommendations and to ensure you are up to date on necessary vaccinations.

Annapurna Base Camp

Nepal | 4,130m

FAQ'S

Kit

What clothing should I wear on the mountain?

We advocate the beg, steal, borrow or hire principle for first timers instead of buying brand new stuff you'll never use again. The cost of equipment is usually a major deterrent for people coming onto trips in the first place. However, if you think you'll reuse your gear, then it's worth starting to invest in good gear. The old adage often applies – you get what you pay for.

Our guides usually start the walk wearing long, lightweight trekking trousers and T-shirts. Long trousers are recommended as a deterrent to insects, stinging plants and to act as sun protection.

Shorts can also be worn on the initial few days of the trek as the temperature is usually warm. Ensure that you apply sun-protection frequently, or buy a once a day product such as P20 if you're not very good at remembering to apply it.

The prevailing conditions on the mountain will dictate what you will wear: if it is cold when you leave the camp in the morning then wear your fleece. As things warm up take advantage of the zipper system which most trekking clothing has – open and close the zips to adjust to your own preferred temperature. If you get too warm then take a layer off.

What do your guides wear at Base Camp?

As we gain altitude it gets cold and daytime temperatures of -10 to -15 C are not unusual. Closer to Base Camp our guides wear 2 sets of base layers (Long Johns), a fleece layer (top and bottom) and then on the legs waterproofs whilst on the upper torso a down jacket is worn.

If the wind picks up our guides will put on their windproof layer to ward of the windchill. On their hands they'll wear a thin layer of working gloves over the top of which is a thicker set of ski gloves or mittens.

Their heads are covered by a thermal beanie hat and the hood of their down jackets. On their feet the guides wear one pair of thin socks and one pair of thick.

Do I need waterproofs?

Waterproof are needed on hand at all times. It is not unusual to be caught out in an afternoon rain or snow storm. Waterproofs should be Gortex material or similar. Waterproofs are used as an invaluable wind shield to protect you against the effect of wind-chill when a strong wind blows.

Annapurna Base Camp

Nepal | 4,130m

FAQ'S

What is the best type of footwear to use?

Because of the huge variety of terrain encountered when doing this trek it is very important to wear the right footwear. Boots should be sturdy, waterproof, insulated against cold temperatures and offer adequate ankle support.

In addition it is highly recommended that your boots are well worn in to prevent the formation of blisters. A range of suitable boots are on the market and further advice as to which brand names are available can be found online or at your local gear store. It is not necessary to buy technical boots with crampon clips as crampons are not used at any time.

What clothing and footwear is appropriate when staying in the tea houses and lodges?

There is no electricity much above Pokhara and lodges are heated by a pot-bellied stove fuelled with either wood or yak dung. These provide adequate warmth for the dining rooms but are not connected to the bedrooms. A thick fleece or light down jacket provides adequate warmth for inside the buildings.

For footwear we suggest using either trainers or crocs. It is nice to get out of your trekking boots and to have something light to wear for the evenings.

Can I buy equipment in Kathmandu?

Kathmandu has hundreds of gear stores selling stuff at very cheap prices. The majority of them sell imitation clothes and equipment but 360 Expeditions guides will be on hand to show you the shops selling the good quality stuff.

What should I carry inside my daysack?

A daysack is worn at all times during the trek. The content of this is mandatory and should include: a fleece (for when taking breaks or the weather changes), a full set (top and bottom) of waterproofs, sufficient water for the day, snacks, camera equipment, personal medication and a head torch.

Annapurna Base Camp

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FAQ'S

What do the porters carry? What is the correct porter weight?

Your day to day sack (above) should weigh no more then 3 – 4 kg and a sack of around 40L capacity will more than suffice. This rucksack can be filled to the brim with extra stuff when checking in at the airport. It is important that this bag has an adjustable waist belt to transfer the weight of your daily load onto your hips and from here onto your legs (strongest muscles) to do most of the carrying.

Your porter bags should be of a soft material duffel bag or rucksack variety and should not be a suitcase or hard bodied metal case. Furthermore they should weigh no more then 12-14 kg when packed for the trek. Since we are staying in lodges we will not need to bring any special camping equipment. A change of clothes, some warm clothing for when we get to the higher altitudes, sleeping bag and your toiletries should form the basis of your porter load.

In addition a pair of trainers to be worn in the lodges and some luxuries such as a book or playing cards etc will be more than sufficient.

Are down jackets necessary?

They are highly recommended and are worth their weight in gold at altitude. Our guides wear them every evening at higher altitudes.

A layer system comprising of several layer of base layers, fleeces, jumpers and a thick coat will suffice on but nothing beats the efficiency of a good down jacket (especially when topped with a waterproof layer).

Annapurna Base Camp

Nepal | 4,130m

FAQ'S

How warm does my sleeping bag need to be?

They should be rated within the -15C comfort zone. From the first night upwards it is not unusual to experience frosty nights and a good night's sleep is important to give you the best chance to complete this trek. Ensure you get a sleeping bag that has this temperature rating at this comfort zone rather than its extreme zone.

Our guides take sleeping bags rated to well below -10C to ensure that they are warm at night. 3 season sleeping bags can be enhanced by using on inner silk sheet (or similar). The idea is to be as comfortable and warm as possible for the night and henceforth to ensure plenty of sleep for the arduous days ahead.

It is important to remember that down sleeping bags work by your own body heating the down that's inside the bag. Once you have warmed up the bag the down will retain the heat and ensure that you sleep at body temperature.

For best results it is best to wear as little as possible when inside your sleeping bag. Our guides will often only wear a set of thermals in their bag. It is important for the bag to trap the heat. By wearing multiple layers of clothing your clothing will trap this heat and your bag will not function properly.

What clothing is suitable for when we come back from the mountain?

Kathmandu is at a relatively low altitude and daytime temperatures are warm. When in Rome do as the Romans. Shorts and T-shirts are fine to wear during the course of the day. Evening wear generally tends to be casual with long trousers and casual shirt appropriate for all hotels and restaurants.

Nepalese are generally quite conservative in their dress code and are generally well dressed despite their situation in life. Your town and party clothes can be left in a safe lock up at the hotel and do not need to be taken up the mountain.

Is it possible to rent equipment before I go?

It is possible to rent a wealth of clothing and kit from our hire partners at www.outdoorhire.co.uk or our local ground crew but we do advocate the use of personal equipment for footwear.

The Weather

What is the best time of the year to do the Annapurna Base Camp trek?

The optimal climbing seasons are late March through to early June when the daytime temperatures are the warmest and there is a reduced cloud cover. Late September through to December is also good as the daytime conditions are generally cooler but still clear.

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FAQ'S

How cold can it get?

The temperature can vary widely. Sometimes it is only a degree or two below freezing, but trekkers should be prepared for possible temperatures as low as minus 15 Celsius, especially in conjunction with wind chill.

Travel

Do I need to book my own flights to Nepal?

360 Expeditions will be booking flights on your behalf. We provide confirmation of flight times and departure terminal approximately three weeks before your departure date. Be aware that flight schedules are subject to change and ensure that you have checked your flight details before setting out for your flight.

Insurance

Do I need special travel insurance for the trek?

You must carry individual travel insurance to take part in the expedition. We cannot take you on the mountain without proof of insurance.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

Your insurance details are requested on the booking form, however this can be arranged at a later date. 360 Expeditions will be requesting your insurance details 8 weeks before your departure.

Entry into Country

My passport runs out 3 months after the trek, is this OK?

Your passport should be valid for 6 months after the date the trek starts. If it runs out before you may be refused entry. It is also advisable to have a couple of photocopies of your passport in case of loss.

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FAQ'S

Do I need a visa for Nepal?

Visas are compulsory for entry into Nepal for all foreign nationals. You can either apply for your visa on arrival in Nepal, or in the UK before you travel.

If you decide to apply before you go, you may be selected to attend the Nepalese Embassy to collect your visa. If this is the case, you'll be given a set day and time when you have to do this. If this happens and you can't make it to the embassy, there are a couple of options:
1. you can nominate someone to go on your behalf.
2. you can ignore the request to go to the embassy and sort your visa on arrival. There will be no issues getting your visa on arrival even if you've already started the process in the UK.

It is very easy to get your visa on arrival in Kathmandu and there are now electronic visa booths at the airport which take your photo, allow you to fill in all the relevant information and spit you out the completed visa application. You then just queue to pay your fee!

A 15 day visa costs US$30 and a 30 day visa costs US$50.

Training

How can I best train / prepare for this trek?

360 Expeditions will be on hand to talk through a fitness plan that will suit you and your lifestyle as being trekking fit before coming to the mountain is of great importance not only to maximise your chances of reaching Base Camp but much more importantly to enhance your overall enjoyment of the expedition: if you are struggling from day one then you will not enjoy the rest of the trip.

Physical preparation does not have to be Herculean: concentrate on cardio-vascular exercise during the week by taking short runs when time allows and try to spend at least 2 weekends a month going on long duration walks (longer than 6 hrs) carrying a rucksack of around 10kg.

This kind of regime will not only prepare your body to carry minor loads but will harden your body against the big days on the mountain itself. In addition it will help break in your boots and get used to your equipment. In combination this will pay dividends because even though you can't train for altitude your body will be ready for arduous days and you will be familiar with how to best use your equipment, both adding to you being able to enjoy and appreciate the mountain all the more.

Please also see the recommended training program for the Annapurna Base Camp trek.

Annapurna Base Camp

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FAQ'S

Finance

What is the currency in Nepal

It is the Nepalese Rupee. This can only be obtained in Nepal. Currency equivalent to approximately £300 should be sufficient for the duration of your stay in Nepal. This will include enough to cover tips for the whole tripand should be brought in US Dollars or a mixture of USD and Pound Sterling.

What advice do you have on tipping?

Although not obligatory tipping has become ingrained in the culture, and once you see how hard the Sherpa work for you for such a small amount of money relative to your own UK salaries, these will be much appreciated.

As a guide we recommend tipping around $160 for the local staff and whatever you feel for the 360 Leader. A good leader can have a huge impact on the success and enjoyment of an expedition.

Electronics

Do we need a travel adaptor for the plug sockets in Annapurna or are they the same as UK?

The voltage is 220v / 50Hz like the UK. Rectangular or round three-pin plugs are used. It is possible to recharge your electronic items and batteries for a small cost at some lodges.

General

Will we have time for shopping in Kathmandu?

You have some time in Kathmandu before the trek begins which will give you plenty of time to pick up souvenirs. You will be able to leave any purchases safely stored at the hotel in Kathmandu.

Annapurna Base Camp

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360 EXPEDITIONS

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Annapurna Base Camp

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TRAINING PROGRAM

To begin 6 months prior to the expedition where possible.

1. CVS: Cardiovascular exercise which is low impact such as swimming, cycling, cross trainer, rowing.

2. Weekend walk should be done over undulating terrain. Only a light rucksack needs to be carried.

3. For specific exercises it is worth doing static squats and heel raises on a regular basis to improve leg muscles prior to the trip. Static squats are especially useful to help protect the knees. Please remember that it is still important to have a well balanced workout using a variety of muscle groups.

4. It is worth winding down and resting in the week leading up to the trip, doing several light walks to keep things going.

5. When walking going at a pace of a brisk walk with a light sweat and enough to feel breathless is recommended

6. During the program, rather than step up suddenly each month (example, going for 3 one hour walks each week during the weekdays in April to 3 one and half hour walks suddenly in May) it is better to build up gradually each week so there isn't a large transition (example, going for 3 one hour walks during week 1 in April, going for 3 one hour and ten minute walks during week 2 in April, going for 3 one hour and fifteen minute walks during week 3 in April, going for 3 one hour and twenty minute walks during week 4 in April)

6. It is important you seek medical advice prior to starting any training program, especially if you are not used to regular physical exertion

All the best with your training!

MONTH 1

OPT 1	OPT 2
2 x 30 mins weekday walk 1 x 1 hour weekend walk 1 x 10 mins CVS	1 x 30 mins weekday walk 2 x 1 hour weekend walk 1 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 2

OPT 1	OPT 2
2 x 45 mins weekday walk 1 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS	1 x 45 mins weekday walk 2 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 3

OPT 1	OPT 2
2 x 45 mins weekday walk 1 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS	1 x 45 mins weekday walk 2 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 4

OPT 1	OPT 2
3 x 1 hour weekday walk 1 x 4 hours weekend walk 3 x 15 mins CVS	2 x 1 hour weekday walk 2 x 4 hours weekend walk 3 x 15 mins CVS

MONTH 5

OPT 1	OPT 2
3 x 1.5 hours weekday walk 1 x 5 hours weekend walk 3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS	2 x 1.5 hours weekday walk 2 x 5 hours weekend walk 3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

MONTH 6

OPT 1	OPT 2
3 x 2 hours weekday walk 1 x 6 hours weekend walk 3 x 30 mins CVS	2 x 3 hours weekday walk 2 x 6 hours weekend walk 3 x 30 mins CVS

360 EXPEDITIONS

"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty & well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out & loudly proclaiming 'Wow! What a Ride!' "

Dream it. Plan it. Live it.

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