

Nepal



Tour De Nepal: Powered By Enlightenment

12 Day Mountain Bike Tour in Nepal

“The highest you will ever get on two wheels: powered by enlightenment!”

Nepal is well known as one of the top trekking destinations in the world because of its fame as home to the highest peaks in the world and its stunning scenery. Now open for biking it will only be a matter of time before it becomes one of the ultimate mountain bike destinations. Come now before the word gets out!

We set off for our journey from the ancient and colourful city of Kathmandu for a four day bike trip in the surrounding hills of the Kathmandu Valley. We visit ancient Newari villages, ride beautiful trails and meet the amazing local people along the way.

From Kathmandu we travel to Pokara where we hop on a spectacular mountain flight that brings us high up in the Himalayas. During the next four days we will be riding on the world famous Annapurna Circuit with scenery that will simply take your breath away. We'll be riding through four different climate zones and will drop 3200m or 10.000ft over three thrilling days.

This will be the ride of a lifetime!



Itinerary

Day 1 | Kathmandu - 1350m/4430ft

Flying into Kathmandu it is possible to see below you the Himalayas that you will soon have a chance to taste up close and personal. When you arrive at the airport our team will be waiting for you, simply look for the sign with your name on it. The drive into Kathmandu takes approximately 25 minutes. Time to check into the hotel and get comfortable before our group meeting that evening. There are no activities planned during the day today but in our group meeting you will get to meet your fellow travellers and the tour leader. After this we will go for a short orientation walk and a local meal. For those booking extra accommodation and arriving earlier than day 1, you will be booked in our hotel in Kathmandu located at a prime location, the hotel staff here is both very helpful and knowledgeable, they can set you off in the right direction should you wish to go out and explore the city. (D)

Day 2 | Dhulikel - 1350m | cycle 38km

After an early breakfast we transfer east to the Newari medieval city of Patan. This is where our cycling adventure begins. First we have a 6km uphill ride through the forest to then be rewarded with an amazing 18km downhill stroll towards the medieval town of Panauti where we will have lunch. From here is another hour to the hotel. The views from the hotel overlooking the valley are simply breathtaking. (B L)

Day 3 | Bhaktapur - 1350m | cycle 35km

After another early breakfast we ride towards Namobuddha. A beautiful religious site and Buddhist monastery perched on the top of a hill far away from the normal tourist track. We ride on various terrains visiting local villages along the way. In the afternoon we will head towards Bhaktapur; the most beautiful city of the Kathmandu valley. To avoid the traffic we will transfer the last 25km. (B L)

Day 4 | Nagarkhot - 2000m | cycle 22km

From Bhaktapur we ride northeast to Nargarkot. The ride to Nargarkot is a hard but rewarding 22km uphill climb on paved road. Our ride takes us along the rim of the valley along picturesque terraced farmland with the houses of the local farmers clinging on the steep hillside. When we reach the highest point of our ride we are rewarded views of the snowy peaks of the Himalayas looming in the distance including the commanding presence of Mount Everest (weather permitting). Our accommodation for the evening is a charming hotel perched on the ridge. (B L)

Day 5 | Kathmandu - 1350m | cycle 55km

Our day begins with an action packed descent on a single track trail. We pass through local, charming villages with beautiful mountain views as the backdrop. We continue our ride to Boudanath Stupa - one of the largest stupas in the world and the Tibetan centre of Kathmandu. In the afternoon we ride back to Kathmandu. (B L)

Day 6 | Pokara - 850m

A short flight will bring us to Pokara. Arriving before noon allows plenty of time to explore and enjoy this charming lakeside town and make some last preparations. Pokhara is a remarkable place of natural beauty. Situated 240km west of Kathmandu Valley, the city is known as a center of adventure. Our hotel is a boutique spa resort with swimming pool and offers stunning panoramic views of Himalayan peaks. (B)

Day 7 | Jomsom - Kagbeni - 2700m | cycle 15km

A spectacular flight will bring us to Jomsom, a lovely village nestled in the Annapurna mountains range of the Himalayas located at 2800m. A shorter ride (2 hours) is scheduled for today to help you acclimatise to the change in altitude. We will ride gently uphill to Kagbeni, situated in the valley of the Kali Gandaki. It is one of the most beautiful villages in the whole Annapurna region. We stay overnight in Kagbeni. In the afternoon we will head out for an optional 10km "adventure ride" in the Mustang Valley. (B L D)

Day 8 | Kagbeni - Muktinath - 3700m | cycle 15km



Today is the toughest climb of the trip. We set off early for a strenuous ride uphill to the spiritual hub of Muktinath making it feel like a true pilgrimage (3700m). While there we take in all of the most beautiful and sacred sights. Depending on the pace of the group and weather conditions we might spend the night in Muktinath or return to Jomsom.

(B L D)

Day 9 | Kalopani - 2550m | cycle 42km

Today's ride is mostly on rolling hills on a wide jeep track. You are surrounded with the most beautiful mountain scenery the whole day. For centuries the Thakali people have fostered a tradition of hospitality for the traders passing along the Thak Khola between Jomsom and Tatopani and this tradition continues today with the warmth shown to visitors passing through. In fact the village of Tukucho at 2590m was once an important stop along the way for salt traders from Tibet. Today's and tomorrow rides are among the most amazing one can do on a bike! (B L D)

Day 10 | Beni - 850m | cycle 45km

We continue our way mostly downhill. Today we will drop more than 1500 vertical meters. Tatopani is the first stop where we will have an early lunch. Tatopani is famous for its hot springs. After lunch we head back to the busy market town of Beni where we meet our driver for our transfer back to Pokara for a 2,5 hour drive. (B L)

Day 11 | Kathmandu - 1350m

Another spectacular mountain flight brings us back to the amazing city of Kathmandu (30 min). Time to maybe have a relaxing massage or do some last minute shopping before we head out for our final night celebration dinner. Our bikes will return to Kathmandu by bus with the local guide. (B)

Day 12 | Departure Day

Today is departure day, please remember to check out by midday, just let us know your onward international flight details for your included airport transfer. (B)

Note

Please note that the itinerary is a statement of intent and to be used as a guideline only. Each day may vary due to the cycling times of the group, weather and trail conditions. The guide in charge of your trip will alter the schedule as necessary and any/all such alterations are at the discretion of Grasshopper Adventures and your guide.

Tour Details

Style

Fully Supported Mountain Biking Tour

Inclusions

- Arrival and departure transfers
- 4 days cycling in the Kathmandu Valley
- 4 days cycling in the Annapurna's
- All accommodation as listed per itinerary
- All transportation as listed per itinerary
- 3 domestic flights including departure taxes
- Grasshopper tour leader
- Local guide/bicycle mechanic, our local guides ride for the Nepali national mountain bike team
- Annapurna Conservation Permit
- All meals while cycling
- Sleeping bag and dawn jacket (while on the Annapurna Circuit)
- A true epic mountainbike adventure

Group Size



Minimum 2, maximum 12

Food

Include meals: 11 breakfasts, 08 lunches, 06 dinners.

Accommodation

8 nights comfortable hotel (twin share), 3 nights local tea houses while cycling on the Annapurna Circuit.

The sleeping arrangements are for twin-share so if you are a single traveler you will be paired up with someone of the same sex. This ensures that whether you are traveling solo or with friends, everyone is paying the same rate.

Extra accommodation

We can book additional accommodation before or after the tour in Kathmandu at competitive rates. Should you wish to extend your stay in Kathmandu just let us know.

Arrival Details

When arriving into Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu you will be met by our team and transferred to your hotel. Please look for a sign with your name on it, the airport is located 7 km from the city centre and the taxi ride takes about 25 min depending on traffic.

Main Luggage

While cycling we will transfer your luggage for you, which is restricted to 15kg in weight. Please pack light for this trip. We will provide a sleeping bag and dawn jacket while on the Annapurna Circuit. The bags are carried by porters and transported by local jeeps and will not be available to you during the day; your daypack should contain all that you need during the day. This generally consists of a warm layer of clothing, water bottle, camera gear, sunscreen, lip balm, etc. Your guide will let you know each evening of any additional items you will need for the following day.

Altitude

AMS (acute mountain sickness) is a serious issue. It is the result of the failure of the body to adapt to high altitude and can affect anyone, regardless of age or fitness. It can occur above 1,800 meters and the likelihood of being affected increases as you ascend. The way to reduce the affects of altitude is to ascend slowly, until you have acclimatized. Poor acclimatization can result in headache, nausea, sleeplessness, difficulty breathing and swelling of fingers and glands. The only cure for AMS is to descend to a lower altitude. Should you be affected by AMS your guide's decision on how best to treat it is final.

Although our routes are carefully planned to allow for proper acclimatization you may feel some effects of altitude for the first few days or at higher altitudes. Breathlessness, lethargy and mild headaches are not uncommon and generally decrease as your body adjusts. Maintaining adequate fluid intake is essential. Please advise your guide if you feel more severe symptoms and do not medicate yourself without discussing it with them first.

Cycling Details

Cycling Days and Distance

8 days - approximately 280km

Difficulty

It is impossible to have a 'foolproof' grading system as everyone has different expectations and perceptions of their own fitness level. Remember that no cycling trip in the Himalaya is a stroll as all involve going up and down at altitude and that altitude affects everyone differently. Regardless of age or fitness, preparation before you arrive is essential. It will make you enjoy your trip even better. We consider this trip to be suitable for anyone with an average level of fitness.



Cycling Conditions

There will be days where the terrain is a mix of undulating, flat, sealed surfaces and steep, rocky climbs. We have one day with a steep ascent on higher altitudes. At least 90% of the trip will be cycling on unsealed surfaces, with a mix of dirt roads and rocky surfaces. The days may be very hot when we are cycling in full sun, however the weather can change quickly if there is cloud cover and wind. March - April - May and September - October - November are fairly dry months so we do not expect a lot of rain, however there might be last summer rains or early monsoon rains which can make roads muddy. Cycling at altitude will make the climbing much more difficult than you would normally find cycling at sea level.

Is this trip for me?

Perhaps one of the biggest concerns when booking a mountain bike holiday is whether you are going to keep up with everybody else or more importantly whether you are fit enough or technically able to enjoy the holiday. It is in our interest to attract customers who will enjoy what we have to offer. An average day consists of 4 to 5 hours in the saddle and always involves a certain amount of challenging terrain and cheeky uphill sections. It doesn't contain miles of jeep track or multiple 1000m+ ascents but being prepared is a must.

This trip is aimed at intermediate mountain bikers with single track experience; week-end riders who get out at least once a week for a few hours of challenging biking.

Bikes

It is always good to have your own mountain bike because you will be familiar with its handling in demanding terrain and you will also have the fit (controls, stem, seat, seatpost, cleats, etc) perfectly dialled in. Any type of hardtail trail bike that retails at US\$800 or more will be fine; for full suspension bikes anything that cost upwards of US\$1300 should be ok. If you are worried about your bike we can advise on its suitability. Nepal is rough on bikes and super light XC components or frames can get damaged easily.

Trail bikes are ideal – robust, light with long travel. Any bike weighing much over 15kg is going to be hard work.

If you bring your own mountainbike to Nepal, some other things to consider are:

- We recommend 100mm travel forks as a minimum and 140mm as a maximum.
- Very heavy downhill specific or extreme free ride bikes are not suitable in this area.
- Any gear ratios are fine so long as you are able to pedal up big hills.
- Light carbon XC tires do not last very well and tend to get torn open.
- Bash guards are useful but not essential.
- A spare derailleur hanger is a must have accessory.
- Bring lots of spare inner tubes and repair kit.
- Service your bike before you get here.
- Latex solution in the inner tubes, or tire liners both work well to prevent punctures. Better still, tubeless.

Bike Hire

If you do not want to trust your pride and joy in the hands of the airlines, we have some good quality hardtail Giant XTC 2 bikes. Designed with technical terrain in mind the geometry provides agile handling, low slung top tube, centered balance and a more upright riding position. Bikes come with hydraulic disc brakes and air forks.

For added comfort you may consider bringing your own seat and pedals which we can easily fit to your rental bike. Please note, renters will be liable for any damage caused to rental bike which is a result of riding accidents. Rental price is US\$20/day.

Helmets

Cycling without wearing a helmet will NOT be permitted on this trip. We do have some helmets for use, however, for best fit you should bring your own.



Transporting Your Own Bike

Most international airlines consider bicycles as part of your regular luggage weight allowance, so you will need to pack light. The best way to transport a bicycle is to package it in a bike box. Most bicycle stores are happy to give away carton boxes for free. You will need to remove the front wheel (and sometimes the rear wheel), handle bars, pedals and seat post. Tape any loose parts to the bike frame and pack a few extras in the box such as your helmet. You can keep your box at the hotel storage until the end of the trip to pack it for the trip home.

Travel Details

Visas

Single entry visas are available on arrival at Kathmandu international airport and all land borders. Please note that the visas are only payable in USD cash. Three passport sized photo is also required.(one for visa and two for trekking permits)

Tourist Visa:

- 15 days multiple entry – US\$25
- 30 days multiple entry – US\$40
- 90 days multiple entry – US\$100

Please note that there might be a long queue at the immigration stands at the airport because most people arrange their visa this way. Alternatively, a visa can be obtained by application to the Nepalese Embassy before arrival. Before you travel check your passport to ensure that there is room for a visa and entry/exit stamps (at least 2 pages) and that it has at least 6 months validation remaining.

Departure Tax

Departure tax is included in all international tickets.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of participating in a Grasshopper Adventure that you hold travel insurance for the duration of the trip. Insurance must include comprehensive medical and emergency evacuation. Your travel insurance details will be checked by your group leader on arrival at the starting point hotel.

If you are looking for an insurer we can recommend World Nomads. [Click to see more details.](#)

Flights

International flights to the starting point and from the finish point are not included in the price of this tour. We can assist with the purchase of inter-Asia flights and/or provide advice if you are considering overland travel. All domestic flights as per itinerary are included.

Money

The official currency of Nepal is the Nepali Ruppee which should be used for most transactions. Nepal now has a modern banking systems with ATMs and money changers in the larger towns. In Nepal it is possible to use Visa/Mastercard or Cirrus/Maestro cards to access cash at an ATM in the larger towns and cities that we visit. You should, however, carry travelers cheques as a backup. Most international currencies can be exchanged so it is not necessary to bring only US dollars - AUD, EUR, CAD, NZD are all accepted at banks in major centres.

For current exchange rates visit:

www.oanda.com

Costs

We recommend that you allow approximately US\$15 per day for food. (when not included). It is customary to tip the guide and porters in Nepal. You should allow approximately US\$50 for tips. Note: this is a guide only, feel free to tip more or less (or nothing) depending on your satisfaction. If you



think your tour leader has done a good job you may also tip him/her. Again this is completely up to you.

Electricity

Nepal works on a 230 volt system and uses European-style and sometimes the old British-style 3 round pin plugs. You can easily buy an adapter in Nepal for much cheaper than in your home country.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for entry into Nepal. However, you should consult your doctor for up to date information regarding vaccinations, high altitude medication and medications for any foreseeable illnesses that may affect you while traveling in Nepal. Be aware that some drugs, including anti-malarials, may have side effects at higher altitude. Please discuss this carefully with your doctor while weighing your options. Also remember that we will be in remote areas and away from medical facilities for some time during this trip for this reason we strongly recommend that you carry a personal First Aid kit as well as sufficient quantities of any personal medical requirements.

Packing

You should consider bringing the following items:

<p>Personal Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortable daypack • Socks: thick and thin • Running shoes or sandals for evenings • Lightweight wool sweater • Fleece jacket • T-shirts - 3 or 4 • Shirt - long sleeved • Pants: lightweight long trousers • Hiking shorts (zip-off-pants) • Hat for sun protection and • Woolen hat for the cold • Gloves - wool or fleece • Scarf • Underwear • Thermal Underwear • Swimsuit • Rain jacket or poncho • Water bottle or camelbag- minimum 1 litre • Sunglasses • Bag liners - large, thick garbage bags to line and water/dust proof your duffel bag • Toiletries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towel • Torch/flash light - headlamp style is ideal • First Aid Kit <p>Bicycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Something to carry your personal belongings in while cycling (day pack, handle bar bag, bum bag) • Helmet • Bicycle gloves • Bicycle short with something to put over it while off the bike • Bicycle shirts <p>Travel Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport with 6 months validity and 2 spare pages • Passport photo (3) • Travel insurance details • Flight tickets • Money - cash/credit cards/travellers cheques • Phrase book
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Climate

Nepal has a generally temperate climate, however altitude makes distinct variations. The monsoon sweeps up from India each summer, making mid June to mid September humid and wet. The three other distinct seasons are all suitable for trekking and each has its own advantages. Changing global weather patterns have had their effect on the Himalayan climate and mountain weather is notoriously changeable. Always be prepared for a change in conditions and note that if severe or dangerous weather conditions occur your guide's decision on any course of action is final.

- Winter (December-February) It is cold and you will need to be prepared, but the air is very clear providing the best mountain views.
- Spring (March-May) Days are increasingly warm and the rhododendrons are in bloom. A very common and pleasant trekking season.



- Summer (June-August) The monsoon season. It will rain almost every day, although generally in the evening and night. The hills turn lush and green and at higher elevations the alpine plants will bloom.
- Autumn (September-November) The most popular trekking season where days are warm, but not hot; there is little chance of snow and skies are clear.

Positive Impact

An integral part of traveling is to have a positive impact on the country that you are visiting. On this trip there are a number of things you can do to have a positive impact on the communities that we visit.

Traveling is as much about how you visit as where you visit. Our guides and group leader follow detailed guidelines on acceptable behaviors and practices. These cover cultural considerations, reduction and disposal of waste and protection of endangered wildlife.

As travelers we will provide you with specific guidelines to help you make responsible decisions whilst traveling. These guidelines cover appropriate dress, etiquette for visiting homes and religious complexes, waste and environmental issues and endeavor to explain cultural behaviors which may seem alien to western travelers.

Dress

Nepal is still quite a conservative country. In rural areas and temples overly revealing clothing is considered offensive. You should make an effort to dress more conservatively in these situations. When visiting temples shorts are acceptable providing they cover the knee. Sleeveless tops are not acceptable in temples.

Phrase Book

A highly memorable part of your travels will be the local people that you meet. In the tourist areas some people will speak English but away from these areas you should learn a few words of Nepalese. We will teach you some of the basics but if you want to really interact we recommend bringing a phrase book.

Donations

Often when coming on trips overseas people like to bring items such as sweets, pens and books for children or old clothing for families. While this is a fantastic idea, if distributed in the wrong way it can actually create more problems. Giving items away to local people can create an expectation that a visiting foreigner equals free give away's. In some communities in Asia this has created whole villages where the only interaction is the locals asking for things. If you would like to donate anything to the communities that we visit we suggest that you give the items to Grasshopper Adventures which we will then pass on to development organisations, schools or whole communities. In this way items are distributed by those working in the communities who understand better the local needs.

Poverty

There a lot of poverty in Nepal which you will see. If you choose to give something to a beggar you must bear in mind the value of money in the country you are visiting. Many beggars can earn more than those who work unskilled jobs. There are organisations in Nepal who are working to alleviate this poverty issue and may be able to do more good with donations that you might like to make. Your Tour Leader will be able to provide more information about this.

FAQ's

How difficult is cycling in Nepal?

The difficulty of our trips depends on where you want to cycle and how long you want to go. The shorter Trips tend to be easier while the longer ones require some physical fitness. Be prepared for



some steep trails leading to amazing views. The pace at which you cycle is up to you. Its never a race. We have friendly and dependable staff to assist you at all times.

What are the Tea Houses like?

Tea houses are a way of life for almost all trekkers. They are the combination of guest house, restaurant, and social hang out. Our experience along these routes have helped us find the friendliest, cleanest, and most enjoyable tea houses with the best views. All tea houses have running water. Many have hot water available for bathing. But we discourage our groups from using water heated by wood fires due to lack of firewood in most villages. Deforestation is a big environmental concern in Nepal They are also a great way help support local villages.

Will we have private rooms and bathrooms?

All the lodges we use have private rooms (twin share) and attached bathrooms with showers and western style toilets.

Where do we eat our meals ?

While staying in the tea houses you will eat breakfast and dinner at your tea house. We will stop for lunch at one of the various trail side restaurants. And snacks are always easy to find.

What type of food is served ?

Almost every tea house serves the traditional Nepali meal Dal Bhat (rice and curried lentils). All tea houses we stay at have a variety of different foods on the menu including noodles, rice, potatoes, vegetables and soup. Some have Nepali versions of western food such as pizza and French fries The choice is yours. Cold drinks and beer are available at most of the tea houses and of course hot drinks are served everywhere.

How safe is the food ?

Food safety is always a big concern when visiting a foreign country. This is why we do our best to choose tea houses and restaurants with clean and sanitary kitchens.

Where do we get water during the trip ?

All tea houses have bottled water for sale. Your guide will assist you with all your needs during the ride.

What clothes should I bring ?

Choosing the right clothing is very important. You want to have enough clothes to stay warm or cool yet not over pack. Usually you will have warm days and cold nights. A warm jacket either fleece or down can be better for the evening. Long under wear and wool socks are good for warmth too. We encourage people to bring a light pair of pants and shorts to wear over your cycling pants. Sunscreen and glasses are a must . Rain and hail can appear on a trek so we suggest a Gore-Tex jacket. Most gear can be purchased in Kathmandu or Pokhara at one of the many outdoor gear shops.

How will the altitude effect me ?

Altitude sickness can be a worry for many people coming from sea level. This is why we give our customers extra days to acclimate to the higher altitudes. Our guides are trained to spot any signs of altitude sickness and know how to react.

What happens if there is an emergency ?

We are prepared for any emergency situation. Our guides are trained in first aid and can deal with most of the basic ailments that occur during the ride. But if a serious emergency occurs and outside help is needed we will evacuated you to one of the International clinics in Kathmandu and contact your travel insurance for you.

How much money should I bring for the trip ?

Cold drinks during the day and an occasional beer after a long day of riding can be awfully nice. These along with any souvenirs are personal expenses. Your guide will let you know as in how much to bring for each day. Our hotel in Kathmandu has a safe where plane tickets, credit cards and other valuables can be kept. As a recommendation US\$250 to 300 should cover your expenses for the



whole trip

What sort of experience do your guides have ?

Our guides are some of the most dependable and experienced cycle guides in Nepal. All of our guides have spent years exploring the mountains and countryside of Nepal. All guides speak English and have a deep knowledge of the various trails. Our guides are trained in first aid and know how to react in any situation. And most importantly our guides are friendly and enjoyable and want to share with you the true beauty of Nepal.

Important

All information in these tour notes is researched with care and provided in good faith. The information subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and Grasshopper Adventures.

