



ANNAPURNA COMBINATION

Lodge / Camping

No. of days. – 18

Grade: Leisure to Moderate

Nepal, a tiny country, nestled in the Himalayas between India and China, is one of the most diverse and fascinating countries in the world.

Covering an area of only 147,181 sq. km, Nepal encompasses the world's highest mountains and the deepest valleys as well as low elevation rain forest.

Although the width of the country is only 200Km North to South, Nepal has the highest altitude variation of any country on earth, from 70m above sea level to 8848m above sea level at the top of Everest.

The Kingdom is divided into 3 elevation zones; the low terrain, the midhill region and the high Himalayas, containing 1/3 of the Himalayan range with 9 of the world's highest mountains. This wide diversity of landform gives Nepal an incredible wealth of flora and fauna.

Nepal is not only famous for its landscape but also renowned for the friendliness of its people. The people of Nepal are as variable and intriguing as the country's geography. There are more than 37 ethnic groups with their own language and culture.

Hinduism is the official religion, practiced by the majority of the population. Many people throughout the country are Buddhist and the two religions have co-existed in harmony over the ages. A small number of people practice Christianity and Islam.

Nepal at a glance:

Longitude: 26'12' and 30'27' North

Latitude: 80 degree 4' and 88 degree 12' East

Population: 24 million

Capital: Kathmandu

Area: 147,181 sq. km.

Annapurna

Annapurna Region is grand and the Circuit is known to be the most beautiful trek you can do in the world. Blooming Rhododendron hills along with tropical forest are mixed with turquoise glacier lakes and snowy 8000 meter peaks. Close to the mountains is the small and pleasant town of Pokhara that is situated by a beautiful lake and is a far calmer town than Kathmandu.

The Annapurnas' have several high peaks. "Annapurna 1" is 8 091 meters and the 10th highest mountain in the world. Annapurna 1 is known to be the most difficult 8000 meter peak to climb but still it was the first mountain above 8000 meter that was successfully climbed. The year was 1950 and it was a French expedition. After the French it took 20 years before the next successful climb. Till today it is still not more than a few hundred people who has summit successfully.

Your Adventure

This adventure offers you an awesome experience of trekking in the Himalayas along with a thrilling experience of rafting in a Himalayan river, and a Jungle Safari in the subtropical jungle of the lowlands of Nepal. Magnificent mountain views, ecological and cultural diversity, ethnic villages with terraced farmland and hospitable local people make this an exciting and fascinating trek. The highlight of this trek is Poon Hill, from where you can see breathtaking sunrise views on the ranges of Dhaulagiri, Annapurna and Manaslu which are above 8000m.

After this fascinating trek, we have an exciting experience of rafting in the Trishuli River followed by a jungle safari in Chitwan, where you can see one-horned rhinos, bisons, sloth bears, leopards and if you are lucky, you might see the Royal Bengal Tiger. The elephant ride itself is worthwhile. These treks are equivalent to moderate walks in moderate altitude (at around 3000m+) These walks can be 5 to 6 hrs each. Good physical condition is required. In fact anyone with a sound health and reasonably fit can do the trek. Still a little training prior to trek is required so you can do it without much difficulty.

Summary

Trek Distance:	Approx. 105 km
Maximum altitude:	3 210m (Poon Hill).
In / Out:	Kathmandu



Itinerary

- Day 1.** Arrive in Kathmandu (1330m), welcome dinner
- Day 2.** Half day city tour around Kathmandu Valley, lunch and trek briefing
- Day 3.** Fly to Pokhara (890m) and trek to Pothana (1950m)
- Day 4.** Trek to Landruk (1751m)
- Day 5.** Trek to Jhinu (1740m) thermal springs
- Day 6.** Trek to Chuile (2250m)
- Day 7.** Trek to Banthanti (2700m)
- Day 8.** Trek to Ghorepani (2850m)
- Day 9.** Early morning hike to Poon Hill (3210m) for sunrise views and trek to Tadopani (2600m)
- Day 10.** Trek to Ghandruk (1951m)
- Day 11.** Trek to Nayapul. (1010m), drive to Pokhara (890m)
- Day 12.** Drive to Charaudi and commence rafting
- Day 13.** Continue rafting
- Day 14.** Drive to Chitwan Jungle Lodge
- Day 15.** Activities in Chitwan Jungle lodge
- Day 16.** Morning Activities in Chitwan Jungle lodge/ afternoon drive to Kathmandu
- Day 17.** In Kathmandu
- Day 18.** Departure

Please Note that the above itinerary is only a guide and that it could change. A lot of things have to be taken into account like weather, general walking pace of the group, mountain safety etc. Your group leader can change the schedule if necessary with prior notice to you, keeping safety first in mind.

Your Activity

Day 1 - Arrival in Kathmandu

Once you reach KTM airport and finish with the immigration and custom formalities be prepared to confront the confusion outside the airport which is common in most of the south Asian countries. As you walk out of the Exit door into the passenger pick up area you will see hundreds of people with different sign boards in their hands, taxi drivers looking for fares, hotel touts looking for customers and porters trying to help with the luggage for tips. Please remain calm and do not walk out of the restricted area into the crowd straight away. Remain there and try to find the Questropix sign board. Once you spot it, walk straight to the signboard and identify yourself. From here we will take care of you.

When you arrive to your hotel you will be briefed about your activities and "do's and don'ts" while your stay in Kathmandu. In the evening all the group members will be asked to meet at the lobby where you will have to fill in the application form for the **Annapurna Area Conservative Project - permit** and we will also collect your Passport and Air tickets for reconfirming your return flight. All these documents will be held in Questropix's safe and will be returned to you after your trek. Then we will go for a traditional Nepali dinner at Kathmandu's finest Nepali restaurant to end the day.

Day 2 - City tour and Trek briefing

After breakfast you will be taken for a half day city tour where you will be visiting some historical temples and monuments. You will end your sightseeing with a lunch.

After your lunch you will return to your hotel and your Group leader will give you your trek briefing and issue you your 'trek pack' consisting of a duffle bag, down jacket, sleeping bag, inner liner for your sleeping bag and rain poncho. Your afternoon is free for you to do your packing and purchasing your last minute items for your trek.

Day 3 - Flight to Pokhara, drive ½ hour and trek 3½ hours to Pothana (1 950 m)

We depart from the hotel early in the morning and are transferred to the domestic terminal at Kathmandu airport. From here we fly to Pokhara, which is a spectacular flight, flying west, parallel to the mountain range with a flight time of about 30 minutes. After arrival at Pokhara we will be then transferred by road (private bus) to the starting point of the trek at Dhampus Phedi, which we usually reach in the early afternoon. A long, steep, stony staircase welcomes you at the beginning of the trek. After about 2 hours of steady climb, passing terraced farms, and villages, we reach Dhampus. Here, our ACAP and other permits are checked and entries are made in the tourist register. From Dhampus, it takes another 1 ½ hrs to Pothana. Superb views of the great peaks of Annapurna 2, Annapurna 3 and Annapurna 4 and Machhapuchhare can be seen.

Day 4 - Trek to Landruk (1 751 m) 5 hours

We wake up at 6:30 am. After a cup of refreshing herbal tea, and a wash, we gather in the dining. After breakfast, we begin our trek with a steady ascent through a forest, on a well defined path, to a pass called Bhichok Deorali (2100m). From here we see beautiful views of the Annapurnas and also a bird's eye view of Pokhara. We then descend through forest to a small village called Tolka. We stop here for lunch. To the north there are, again, superb views of the Annapurna mountains. The trail contours around the valley and descends gently to Landruk. It is fairly big village and since we reach Landruk early, we can utilize the rest of the day exploring the village.



Day 5 - Trek to Jhinu Danda (1 740 m) 3½ hours

We begin our trek descending stony steps. We trek along the banks of a river, called Modi Khola until we reach a place called, New Bridge. We cross the Modi Khola and start climbing stony steps and continue ascending for about an hour and a half to reach Jhinu Danda. We call it a day here and for a good reason. After lunch we go down to the banks of the Modi Khola, where we indulge in a dip in the hot springs, located right next to the river. There are 3 pools of warm water from the natural hot springs. The relaxing thermal waters are believed to have several benefits on health and are guaranteed to relax your tired muscles and bones.

Day 6 - Trek to Chuile (2 250 m) 4 hours

Today's walk includes quite a lot of uphill and downhill. We begin with climbing stony steps for about an hour and a half to reach a resting place with a couple of teashops. From here, the trail that continues to climb north, goes towards to Annapurna Base Camp, but we take the lower trail. The trail then descends along the side of the valley, crossing a landslide. After an hour and a half, we reach a village called Ghurjung. There are a few lodges and a school here. After Machhapuchhare Ghurjung we continue to descend to Kymrong Khola. Here we cross a bridge and then climb up stony steps again. We climb for an hour to reach Chuile.

Day 7 - Trek to Banthanti (2 700 m) 3 hours

There is open grassy field in front of the lodge, from where, beautiful views of and Annapurna can be seen. We continue to trek through the village for a while, and then we enter a dense and beautiful forest. In the spring you get to see the Rhododendrons, Magnolia and a few Orchids in full bloom. We climb for about an hour to reach Tadopani. This place is situated at the top of a pass with stunning views. There are a few lodges here. After resting for a while, we continue to trek through the forest again, going downhill in the beginning and then climbing again. We trek for about another 1 ½ hr to reach Banthanti. We will not go all the way to the village, but we will stop at a lodge called the 'Tranquility Lodge'. This lodge is situated in the middle of the forest and is extremely peaceful. Since it is a short day, you have afternoon free. It is a very good place for practicing meditation. You might also want to do some washing here, as there is a big fire stove in the dining room, where you can dry your clothes in the evening.

Day 8 - Trek to Ghorepani (2 850 m) 4 hours

We continue our trek through the forest, climbing stony steps for about 2 hours to reach a place called Deurali. Deurali is a pass and is at an altitude of 3200m. You get panoramic views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri range. There are a few lodges here. You can find Tibetans selling souvenirs, including jewelries, antiques etc commonly called "something" by the Tibetans- "have a look" and "something?" are the sentences they would commonly use to sell their things to the tourists. These Tibetans live in the Tibetan refugee camp in Pokhara and during the trekking season, they come to these parts to sell their "something".

After Deurali, we walk along a spectacular ridge with the views of the mountains on one side and the views of the lowland valleys on the other side. You might see a few Griffon vultures and some eagles too. We walk along this beautiful ridge for about an hour and a half to reach Ghorepani. Ghorepani is a busy village with at least 30 lodges. There are a few internet cafes, libraries, pubs and bakeries. It is a very touristic place and is quite a change after walking through remote villages for 6 days. It is famous for the sunrise view from Poon Hill, which is about an hour climb from the village.

Day 9 - Morning hike to Poon Hill (3 210 m) and trek to Tadopani 5 hours

We wake up very early, and after a cup of tea, climb well trodden stony steps up to Poon Hill. It takes us about 1 hour to reach the top of Poon Hill. From here we get spectacular sunrise views on the Annapurnas and Dhaulagiri. After spending about an hour here we go back down to Ghorepani. After packing your bags, we eat breakfast. From Ghorepani we retrace our steps back to Tadopani (2 600 m), along the ridges, and through dense forest.

Day 10 - Trek to Ghandruk (1 951 m) 4 hours

We begin our walk along a ridge, through a rhododendron forest. The walk is fairly easy and after a couple of hours through the forest we reach Kymrong Danda. There are a few lodges here. From here we descend to Ghandruk. Ghandruk is an ethnic Gurung Village. The carpet and handicraft factory, run by the Ama's group (mother's self-help group) is worth visiting. In the afternoon, we will go to the ACAP headquarter. They show a documentary about the Annapurna area and issues regarding local conservation.

Day 11 - Trek to Naya pul and drive to Pokhara 3 hours walk, 1½ hours drive

From Ghandruk, we descend very long stony steps for about 2 hours down to Syauli Bazaar, passing beautiful terraced farming fields and villages. From Syauli Bazaar, we continue along the banks of the Modi Khola for another 45 mins to reach Nayapul, which is junction to the highway that connects Baglung district with Pokhara. We are then transferred by private vehicle to Pokhara and checked in to hotel. The rest of the day is free. In the evening we will dine out at one of the many lakeside restaurants. We will have a last night party with our trekking staff, as the next day they will leave for Kathmandu.

Day 12 - Drive to Charaudi / Commence Rafting

We start early and drive from Pokhara to wards Kathmandu. The drive is very scenic, at first following the Marshyandi Khola. After Munglin, half way to Kathmandu, we follow the Trishuli and see the course of the river where we will raft. It takes about 4 hours to drive to Charaudi.



Rafting: White water rafting is negotiating river rapids and obstacles in an inflatable rubber boat with a team of up to eight people and a river guide. Rivers are graded from easy to near-impossible according to their size, the intensity of their rapids and the difficulties. Many people feel uncomfortable and a little scared if they haven't been on white water before, but as long as people are physically fit, they can safely raft on rivers of class 2 to 3. For our rafting trips we have chosen the Trishuli. The Trishuli is the most popular rafting river because of its accessibility of road along its major part. It is Graded 2 to 3 thus making it suitable for novices but at the same time give an exhilarating experience.

On reaching Charaudi, our put-in point, we begin with a lunch on the beach. After lunch, the crew assembles the raft and explains the safety equipment and procedures. Then we begin our rafting adventure. It begins with small rapids and as the canyon narrows the walls becomes steep, the current accelerates and the rapids increase in the size and frequency. During the day, we run a numbers of rapids, that rate to 2 to 3. Some of the rapids are Upset, Tail of Upset, Ladies delight, Krishna etc. We end the day after negotiating the last rapid, Jholungepul, named for an extensive suspension bridge. We camp at Kurintar on a sandy beach on the Trishuli beach.

Day 13 - Continue Rafting

Our second day has a leisurely pace. We will come across half a dozen of exciting rapids which requires a team effort to negotiate. We spend the whole day within its forested canyon. We eat lunch beside the river and have time to explore, bird watch and photograph. Some of the rapids that we negotiate today are, Double Decker, S bend, Swimming rapid, Tea pot and Coffee pot. We end the day after negotiating the rapid "Coffee pot". We camp at Gai Ghat. In the evening, we have a bon fire.

Day 14 - Drive to Chitwan

After we bid farewell to the rafting crew, we drive for 3 hours in the morning to Chitwan. We will be received by the lodge attendants and transfer to a jungle vehicle and drive another 7 kms deep inside the jungle. On arrival to the Jungle lodge, we will be briefed about the lodge, activities and safety.



Chitwan: Chitwan National Park is the most popular destination for tourists wanting to have a good experience of the region's wildlife. It was declared a National Park in 1973. In 1984, UNESCO designated Royal Chitwan National Park a Natural World Heritage Site. The Park offers protection to 56 species of mammals including the one-horned rhinoceros, Bengal tiger, 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! A recent study also points out that over a third of Nepal's tigers are in Chitwan. The Park is spread over an area of 932 sq kms and located in the lowlands of the kingdom. The forest cover is predominantly Sal forest, interspersed with tall grasslands, small hills, ox-bow lakes and flood plains. The best way to see the wild animals are from the top of an elephant!

First day Activities

13:00 Lunch
15:30 Elephant ride / nature walk/visit to observation tower
18:30 Slide show / Tharu stick dance
19:00 Dinner

Day 15 - Continue Jungle Activity

5:30 Wake up call
5:45 Tea/Coffee
6:00 Elephant ride, bird/animal watching
8:00 Breakfast
9:00 Canoe ride / elephant briefing / swimming and bath
13:00 Lunch
15:00 Nature walk / elephant ride / Canoe ride
18:30 Tharu Stick Dance / slide show
19:00 Dinner

Day 16 - Drive to Kathmandu

5:30 Wake up call
5:45 Tea/Coffee
6:00 Animal watching / elephant ride
8:00 Breakfast
9:00 Departure from the lodge
The drive takes about 6 hours along the Prithivi Highway to Kathmandu.

Day 17 - In Kathmandu

You can spend the day for shopping and buying gifts for friends and families back home. A very good option would be to visit Bhaktapur; your group leader will be able to organize a trip to this old city.

Day 18 - Departure

A Day On Your Trek

Although each day is different, considering the weather, general pace of the group and length of the days walk, in general your day begins with a wake up tea at around 6 to 6:30 in the morning. You will then be provided with a bowl of warm water for washing. Then you will need to pack your duffel bag and your daypack and come to the lodge's diner for breakfast.

After breakfast we will hit the trail and usually walk for about 3 to 4 hrs before we stop for lunch. We will give you about an hour and a half rest during lunch, which will also give enough time for the staff to have their lunch and pack. Usually after 3 to 4 hrs of walking we finish the days walk by 4 PM. Tea/ Coffee and snacks will be served on arrival to the lodge. Your Group Leader will often organize side trips in the afternoon. Your dinner will be served around 7 PM.



High Altitude

On this trek you will be going up to 3 210 m, so it is very important to understand the affects of altitude. The greatest provocation is going too high too fast. Questropix itinerary has been carefully designed to minimize the effects of altitude. We ascend slowly and surely allowing enough time for safe acclimatization.

Headaches and breathlessness are common at altitude which in itself is nothing to worry about. In rare cases, this may worsen to Acute Mountain sickness (AMS), so a close watch is kept on all trekkers by the group leader who is trained to recognize the symptoms of AMS which are severe headaches, nausea, lethargy, loss of appetite serious breathlessness even at rest. If any trekkers show such signs they will be descended to relatively lower and safer altitude. The Group Leader's decision on evacuating such person to a safe altitude is final. Do not medicate yourself without first informing your group leader. Going to altitude slowly with adequate rest and adequate intake of fluid (3 to 4 litres per day), you will most likely have no problems apart from breathlessness on hills which is completely normal as the percentage of Oxygen in the air is relatively lower to that at sea level.

The most important thing is not to worry about altitude because our team is there to take care of you.

Staff

Group leader: your most important member of your staff. Our Group leaders are highly trained in all aspects of the trek, conservation, first aid specializing on altitude sickness, emergency procedures and have extensive knowledge of the natural history of the area.

Sirdar: His job is to manage and organize staff duties. He is responsible for the actual operation of the trek.

Sherpas: Their job is to lead your way and distribute equal loads to the porters.

Porters: They are responsible to transport your duffle bags and their job finishes once they reach the designated lodge. Our porters are provided with Gore-Tex suits, trekking boots, gloves, hats, socks, snow gaiters and snow goggles. Most importantly, we regulate them on a 25 Kg carrying which no other company does. Our clients can therefore feel comfortable knowing that our porters are working in a good humane condition. During the trek you can see porters carrying 60-70 kg and sometimes even more than 100 kg!!)



Weather

Oct/Nov and March/April

On the trek at lower altitude (2 500 m to 3 500 m) during daytime the max temp can be around 22C to 28C and the min. temp can be 8C to 15C

At higher altitude (3 500 m to 5 500 m) the daytime max temp can be between 17C to 22C and min. temp can be between -4C to 8C

Dec to end of Feb

On the trek at lower altitude (2 500 m to 3 500 m) during daytime the max temp can be around 15C to 20C and the min. temp can be 2C to - 8C

At higher altitude (3 500 m to 5 500 m) the daytime max temp can be between 12C to 18C and min. temp can be between -4C to -20C

Please note that this is just general information and it could vary marginally.

Our Services

- All internal transportation, in private vehicle.
- Services of English or/and Swedish speaking guide.
- Porter's and sherpa's assistance.
- 4 nights in tourist class hotel on bed and breakfast basis while in Kathmandu.
- Welcome dinner.
- Half day guided city tour with lunch.
- Use of a personal trek pack consisting of a duffle bag, down jacket and sleeping bag with a fleece inner-liner.
- All meals while on trek.
- Afternoon tea/coffee service on arrival at the lodge.
- Twin share accommodation in trekking lodges with shared bath and toilet facilities.
- Two days Rafting package with all camping facilities and transportation to Rafting pick up point in private vehicle.
- 2 nights / 3 Days Jungle Safari Package with all meals and Transportation to and back from Chitwan in Private Vehicle
- National Park fees.
- Staff insurance, tourist service fee and all taxes applicable as per state law.

Not Included

- Personal accident and rescue insurance. You must provide your own rescue insurance
- Mineral water, beer, soft drinks and extra tea/coffee outside of normal meal times.
- Private room accommodation in Kathmandu unless a single supplement is paid.
- Optional tips to guides and porters.
- International airport departure taxes.
- Visa costs.
- Helicopter evacuation in the unlikely situation, although we do arrange for it and make the necessary documents so that you can claim from your insurance.

Recommendations for things you should bring:

- Water bottle (3 bottles min 1 litre each, should be able to hold hot water)
- Day pack medium size 35-40 litres
- Sunglasses
- Duct tape small roll.
- Stuff bags smaller (plastic) bags to organize you duffle bag
- Money belt
- Toiletries we provide toilet papers
- Towel
- Torch preferably head lamp
- Penknife
- Disposable lighter
- Sewing kit
- Medical kit as per your prescriptions. It should be noted that the group leader will be carrying a first aid kit.

Optional

- Walking sticks
- Cameras
- Knee guard for those with bad knees.

Clothing

- Trousers:** One lightweight for easy walking and 1 warmer for colder days preferable wind/water proof, 1 stretchable running trousers
- Shorts:** Not too high cut revealing ones
- T-shirts:** At least 3 or 4
- Hats:** Sunhat and woollen ones for colder days
- Gloves:** Woollen and Gore-Tex
- Thermal underwear:** Light weight tops and trousers, preferably woollen, at least 2 pairs
- Socks:** At least 4 pairs (both thin and thick woollen ones)
- Jackets:** 1 fleece and 1 Gore-Tex wind/waterproof. Please note that we provide down jackets.
- Walking boots:** Preferably waterproof
- For Rafting:** Swim suit / T-shirts / Shorts
- For Jungle Safari:** Full sleeve shirts and trousers preferably dark colored

Healthy and trouble free holiday

There are no compulsory vaccinations required for entering Nepal. However please consult a doctor for vaccination against Typhoid, Meningitis, polio, and hepatitis. If you have special dietary requirements or allergies, please through your agent, give us a list of what you can and can't eat so that we can provide proper food for you.

If you are undergoing a course of prescription medicine, please ensure that you have sufficient supplies for the entire holiday. Some types of drugs including antimalarias have side effects at high altitude; therefore please consult your doctors regarding these drugs. The places you trek are mosquito free and there has been no report on malaria in Kathmandu for the past couple of decades.

Insure yourself

We highly recommend you to take a comprehensive Personal Travel Insurance before leaving home. This should cover for your loss of baggage, airline delays, sickness, and accidents. And it should also cover you for Emergency Helicopter Evacuation.

Money Matters

The ideal currency to bring with you is US\$ or Euro in traveller's cheques.

In Kathmandu: Each meal will cost around 4 to 6 US\$. Plus 10 to 20 US \$ for your taxis if you wish to go around the city.

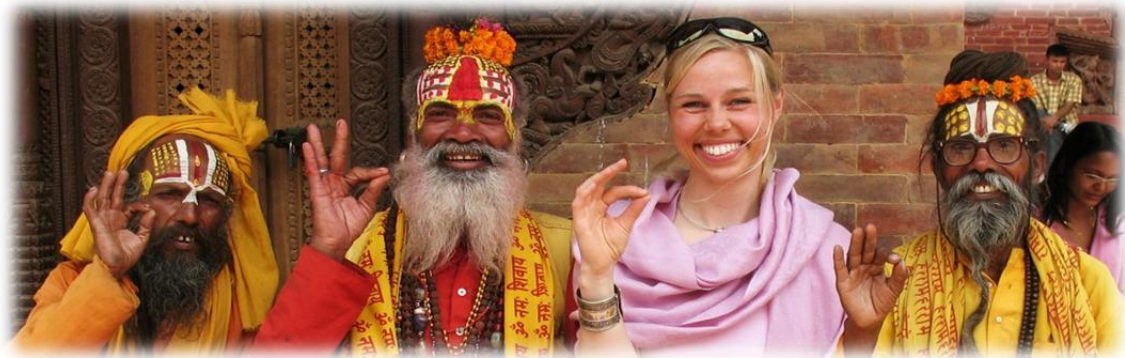
On trek: you will need around 6 to 8 US\$ per day. This money is for your hot showers, chocolates, soft drinks and beers etc and also for small donations in the monasteries.

Tipping

Although tipping is entirely optional and personal matter the following is recommended as a guideline

In Kathmandu: for bellboys, waiters and porters 20 to 30 Nepali Rupees

On the trek: At the end of the trek it is a customary to tip the field staff. The recommended amount is 55-75 US\$ depending on group size. The Group leader will collect the tip and then split it between the staff and put it in envelopes so that the trekkers can give it to the staff during the "Farwell Ceremonies"



Some Do's and Don'ts

Nepalese people treat visitors as special guests. Although they will never rebuke you publicly for unknowingly offending them, we must consider their culture.

While in Nepal please observe the following:

- Full or partial nudity is not accepted.
- Over display of affection between men and women, especially in temples and monasteries are discouraged.
- Please remove your shoes before entering monasteries and temples.
- Never point the soles of your feet at a person or shrine.
- Many Hindu temples are closed to non-Hindus. Please ask before entering.
- Locals walk around the Mani walls and Stupas in a clockwise direction as a respect and they expect you to do the same although it is not compulsory.

ENJOY!

