

Annapurna Circuit Trek

The Annapurna Circuit is a classic walking/trekking holiday in Nepal, often ranked as the best circuit trek in the world. The Annapurna Circuit trek is the longest trek in the Annapurna region. There are four regions that are passed through on the trek; Lamjung, Manang, Mustang and Myagdi. Lamjung and Myagdi are in the lower elevations and both are predominantly Hindu; with green subtropical valleys, villages and terraced farming. We begin from these lowland farms and climb the foothills until we reach alpine meadows. Next we will cross the classic Thorung La pass to take you to the infertile Tibet like land on the other slope of the Himalaya, to Mustang. This gives you a rare opportunity to experience a wide variety of landscapes, cultures, ethnicities as well as diverse flora and fauna in a single trek. And of course there are spectacular mountain views all along the route!



The Annapurna circuit trek starts from Beshisahar. Trekking along the Valley of Marshyangdi River the trek passes through hillside villages and forests. Next we reach exotic Manang village at 3500m. Manang is famous for its Buddhist culture, great Himalaya views and old monasteries. This Buddhist village (with monasteries hanging on cliff faces) has great mountain views that attract many adventurers. We walk slowly and acclimatize carefully as we cross the famous Thorung La pass at 5416m. on the tenth day of our trek and reach Muktinath. Muktinath is a popular Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimage site high in the mountains. Then we descend through enchanting Jharkot and the ancient Tibetan town of Kagbeni before we reach the dramatic Kaligandaki gorge, the deepest on the planet. The trek then proceeds through the beautiful hillside villages of Marpha and Tukucho. Along the route the towering Dhaulagiri and Annapurna mountains will continuously capture your attention. Further down along ancient trade route to Tibet we can enjoy hot springs in Tatopani and climb the infamous 'Poon Hill' for great views of the Himalaya once more.

Itinerary

Day 1: Kathmandu arrival and transfer to your hotel. If there is time today you will also receive the trek briefing. If you are too tired we can do this on day 2. Overnight in Kathmandu.

Day 2: Kathmandu City Tour. You can view that itinerary in the "TOURS" page. Today you can also adjust to jet lag and complete the briefing if we didn't accomplish that yesterday. Overnight in Kathmandu

Day 03: Drive Kathmandu to Besi Shahr. Your guide will arrive at your hotel to pick you up after breakfast and we will drive to Besi Shahr (6hrs.) then make a short trek to Bhulbhule or stay in Besi Shahr tonight. It is about 185km to this region from Kathmandu; however the road from Kathmandu to Besi Shahr is very colorful in more ways than one! We follow the Trishuli River for the first 4 hours and next the Marshyangdi River. On the Trishuli River you will see some rafters enjoying the whitewater. When you get to Besi Shahr the scenery of the snowcapped mountains begins.

Day 04: Besi Shahr to Baundada (1430m): Your trek really starts today! The trail goes up-up-up to Khudi (a Gurung village), Bhulbhule and Ngadi. As we continue the trail offers beautiful views of Himalchuli and the melody of the Khudi River. After apx. 6 hrs. we will reach our first day true destination, Baundada. Overnight here.

Day 05: Bahundanda to Chamje (1430m): Today's walk is apx. 6 hrs, across rivers, under waterfalls and through some small villages. The trail climbs steeply up today; it's more of a trek than a walk. We continue to the stone village of Jagat, located in the Marshyangdi valley. After Jagat the trail continues along some steep ups and downs to Chamje, through

scenic forest. The landscape is of a somewhat different 'nature' at this point and the altitude of the mountains here begin to offer a different (dare I say) metaphysical experience.

Day 06: Chamje to Dharapani (1860m.) 6 more hrs. today to Dharapani. We will follow a river crossing bridge and then pass through a small village named Tal. The steep path becomes a thing of the past at this point as the scenery becomes ever more spectacular. We will move at your pace of course if it becomes too fatiguing. Overnight in Dharapani.

Day 07: Dharapani to Chame (2725m): Today's trail leads west now to Manaslu with superb scenery of Annapurna II becoming apparent to the south. As we continue the Annapurna range starts to open up to magnificent vistas. Overnight in Chame. We will have trekked 6 hrs. today.

Day 08: Chame to Pisang (3100m): We follow a steep climb through the Bhratang eventually reaching Dhukur Pokhari. Some trekkers use a hiking pole for this kind of hike. I like to make my own hiking pole and whittle designs in it at night until it becomes a 'masterpiece' by the end (use a penknife to score the bark and peel off to reveal a design) of the trek. After lunch at Dhukur Pokhari we continue on to Pisang. The hike from Dhukur Pokhari to Pisang is very easy and flat with only two small climbs. We will cross frozen waterfalls and pass great conifers. You can see the peak of Pisang along the way very clearly. This peak is used for training climbers in Nepal. The architecture now is distinctly Tibetan. There is Upper Pisang and Lower Pisang, they are 2 separate villages. Overnight in Pisang. Today's hike takes apx. 6 hrs.

Day 09: Pisang to Manang (3500m): The initial part of the hike from Pisang to Manang is relatively flat; however, there is a steep climb an hour before reaching Humde. The view after the climb is very rewarding with beautiful views of the valley with the mountains as a backdrop. The last hour of the hike to reach Humde from this high point is plateau. There is an airport at Humde with flights to Pokhara during tourist season. Finally we reach the lap of Himalaya Manang valley. Sheer beauty! Overnight in Manang.

Day 10: Acclimatization day at Manang (3500m). Today we spend in Manang village to acclimatize to the higher elevation en route to Thorung La. There are many opportunities (both easy and strenuous) for day trips from Manang. It's possible to climb the ridge to the north for a view of Annapurna IV, Annapurna II and much more; or to descend from the village to the glacier lake at the foot of the huge icefall that drops from the northern slopes of Gangapurna. In the afternoon you may explore Manang village and take a small hike to the '100 Lama's' monastery. Overnight in Manang again.

Day 11: Manang to Yak Kharka (4090m), this trek takes about 4 hours. After a day's rest in Manang you will feel more energy to continue on. Homes here are made more of stone rather than wood. The house frames are wood supported by Yak skull and horns; appearing as ornamental but it was just simply practical (beautiful nonetheless). By afternoon we will reach Yak Kharka and have time to rest. Overnight in Yak Kharka.

Day 12: Yak Kharka to Thorung Phedi (4420m), this trek also takes around 4 hours. Thorung Phedi is a small spot, busy with arrangements for tired trekkers. Mounting the trail, crossing the river, and climbing, we eventually make Thorung Phedi. Some people also try to hike to the High Camp so that the next day can be easier for them but we do not recommend it. It is your choice. We believe High Camp is too great a challenge with respect to the altitude change. Better to acclimatize overnight here at the bottom of Thorung La Pass with a beautiful view at breakfast!



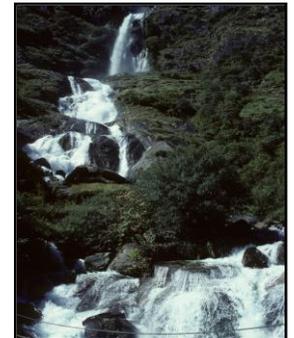
Day 13: Thorung Phedi / Thorung La to Muktinath (3802m): Cross over Thorung La (5416m) then trek down to Muktinath (around 8 hours trekking). Today's experience will be a lifelong memory crossing the Thorung La Pass. The journey starts early in the morning from Thorung Phedi. Several times you may feel like you can't go on through the high-altitude, but you can as long as we pace ourselves properly. To say anything about what you will see today would be an understatement. Also 'The Pass' is marked by Chortens and prayer flags which will become magnificent imprints in your memory bank. We will arrive at Muktinath by evening about sunset. The temple at Muktinath is built in the pagoda style dedicated to Lord Vishnu. For Hindus, Muktinath is one of the most important places of pilgrimage. Overnight here.



Day 14: Muktinath to Marpha (2670m, via Kagbeni – Jomsom). 5 hours of trekking today in an atmosphere rich with oxygen! We begin our descent today. We will trek through the Kagbeni, which is also a famous pilgrimage for Hindus on the anniversaries of their parents passing. After Kagbeni we follow the Kaligandaki River and several hours later we reach Jomsom. Some trekkers end here and fly to Pokhara from Jomsom, or fly to Kathmandu if they are short on time. We usually continue our trail from Muktinath to Marpha. Marpha is also famous as the apple capital of Nepal where you can enjoy many different products made from apples. At this altitude go ahead and enjoy a famous apple brandy. Overnight in Marpha.

Day 15: Marpha to Kalopani (2670m-2480m). It takes 6 (gradual) hours down to Kalopani. The magnificent views of Dhaulagiri, Tukucho Peak, Nilgiri and Annapurna I are very memorable along this route. The valley opens up here at Kokhethanti and we continue our trail to Kalopani. Overnight in Kalopani.

Day 16: Kalopani to Tatopani (1219m). It takes another 6 hours from Kalopani to Tatopani today. Most of the way is downhill. After crossing the bridge at Ghana we continue our trail down to Dana, but before arriving in Dana we see a beautiful water fall called Rupse Chahara. Keep going down the Kali Gandaki to the Tatopani, with its welcome hot springs and it makes your legs relax for you after many days walk.



Day 17: Tatopani to Ghorepani (2860m) 8 hours trekking today. Walking through Ghara and Sikha is very different than Manang and Mustang; we start to see villages with patio farmlands. We walk a steep uphill to ascend Ghorepani. We continue the trek to Phalate and Chitre and in few hours reach Ghorepani where rhododendrons abound. The next morning we should wake up early to climb Poon Hill for sunrise. Overnight in Ghorepani.

Day 18: Ghorepani to Ghandruk (1951m). Early in the morning about 1 hour before sunrise we climb up to Poon Hill (3,210m) for an impressive sunrise over the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri massifs. Poon Hill is famous for sunrise enthusiasts. After Poon Hill we will trek 7 hours to our destination (we will stop for breakfast). We continue trekking to Tadapani through the rhododendron forests all the way down to Ghandruk. This is the second-largest Gurung village in Nepal. Overnight in Ghandruk.

Day 19: Ghandruk to Pokhara (820m) Pokhara is the valley 'floor' at this point of Kathmandu valley. It takes 5 hours to reach Nayapul and then a 45min. drive to Pokhara. Today is actually the end of the trekking portion of your visit. After many days hiking in the mountains, you feel almost metropolitan in Pokhara. Tonight you can visit the Lakeside District of Pokhara. Overnight in Pokhara.

Day 20: Drive / Fly back to Kathmandu. It is a 6 hour drive or a 25 minutes flight back to Kathmandu. Overnight in Kathmandu.

Day 21: Kathmandu. Today is a good day to regroup, pack, or do any last minute shopping. Tonight we will also have a celebratory dinner with your group and experience a Nepalese culture show. We will share stories, laughs and memories which we here at Zen hope will last a lifetime (see client testimonials). Overnight in Kathmandu.

Day 22: Departure: After breakfast we will arrange your transfer to Tribhuvan (Kathmandu) Int'l Airport KTM.

Note: Above itinerary includes FB (Full Board) which is Accommodations, Breakfasts, Lunches and Dinners while on trek. BB (Bed and Breakfast while in Kathmandu. Drinks are not included but may be purchased along the way.

Special note:

Above itinerary can be designed according to your preferences. Please let us know whether you would like to make it a shorter or longer trek. Also, if you would like to stay more than 22 days, we offer city guided tours of Kathmandu, white water rafting, jungle safaris or Everest mountain flights.

Brief Package Highlights:

In this package, we have included 4 nights hotel in Kathmandu at 3 star hotels on BB plan, meals and accommodations during trekking, farewell dinner in Kathmandu, and all ground transportation by private car, an experienced guide and porter and all of the government taxes and necessary permits. If you wish to fly back from Pokhara there is a surcharge.

Included in the cost:

- Airport transfers (round-trip)
- 4 nights' accommodation in Kathmandu on BB plan.
- Meals (Breakfast, lunch and dinner) during trekking.
- Farewell dinner in Kathmandu.
- Fresh fruits during trekking.
- Double occupancy rate.
- Annapurna Trekking Map.
- Tourist bus to Besi Shahar and return from Pokhara (flight return from Pokhara is extra)
- Experienced Government licensed holder guide.
- Travel & Rescue arrangements.
- Porter / Sherpa who will carry your bags during the trekking.
- Food, accommodation, insurance, salary, equipment, transportation, local taxes for guide and porter.
- Group medical supplies (i.e. first aid provisions).
- All necessary paper work and national park permits.
- TIMS (Trekking Information Management System).
- All government taxes and tourist service charges.

Services excluded in the cost:

Meals and drinks while in Kathmandu.

Your personal travel insurance.

Nepal entry visa fee.

Tips for trekking staff and drivers (tipping is expected but it is not mandatory).

Personal shopping and laundry.

Personal extra trekking equipment (i.e. custom poles).

For your information, you must stay two nights in Kathmandu before and after the trek. That is why we have included them. They are 3 star hotels. You may upgrade your accommodations for a surcharge.

For the current pricing, please use the contact form.