

TREK THE HIMALAYAS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How fit do I need to be?

This trekking challenge is all about **endurance** fitness rather than speed and it is certainly not a race. Try to train with your day-pack on your back and get used to drinking and carrying water during your training. Sticking to our training plan will really pay off and while any exercise helps, the best form of preparation is to train with your day-pack on, walking on hilly terrain for long periods on consecutive days. You will be up early in the mornings and trekking for approximately 6-8 hours each day so good fitness is very important. This trek is achievable for most people provided they **train well in advance**.

Keep in mind that this is a **demanding** trek and many people will find elements of the trip difficult at times, whether it is the physical trekking, changing weather, the difference in culture or something else. It is great if you can work as a team and help each other out during any difficulties. While there are challenges, **the enjoyment and rewards that come from trekking among the beautiful Annapurna Mountains are unforgettable!**

What will the trekking be like?

You will be trekking on **varied paths** through valleys, forest and bare mountain slopes above the tree line. Paths on the whole are good but are very steep in places and with many steps to both walk up and down; there's a reason this trek is graded **demanding**. The terrain is **hilly**, and trekking conditions may be slippery after rain. If you are unsteady on your feet you will find trekking poles useful but do make sure you use these when training. When the weather is hot and dry, the conditions may get dusty. Much of the area you trek through is remote, with few good roads. Distances are approximate and timings shown reflect stops to rest. Our highest point is 2850m, which is not considered high altitude, but some people may experience some signs of being at altitude such as **shortness of breath**.

What is the accommodation like?

At the start and end of the trek you stay in good hotels with ensuite facilities on a twin-share basis. If you are travelling alone, you will be paired up with someone of the same sex and similar age – please let us know if you wish to share with a particular person, if you have not already done so. During the trek, the group will camp together in two-man expedition-style tents. You will need to take a sleeping bag, but a fabric sleeping mat is provided. If you have your own thermarest-style mat you may prefer to bring it. There will also be chairs, tables, dining tents and, not to forget, the fabulous views! Please be prepared for fairly rustic conditions, especially if you are only used to nice hotels. Being out of your comfort zone adds to the challenge and makes your achievement all the sweeter.

Can I request single accommodation?

There may be a **limited** number of single rooms at the hotels during this trip, subject to request and at an additional cost, on a first-come, first-served basis. It is not possible to have a single tent during the trek, due to the weight limitations for the porters. Sharing a room is a really good ice-breaker if you don't know anyone else on the trip, so don't worry too much about it!

Who accompanies us on the trek from Discover Adventure?

Your trip will be led by **experienced Discover Adventure leaders**. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises. They are also trained in expedition first-aid. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader.



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Will there be a doctor trekking with us as well?

Depending on group size, an expedition doctor or medic may accompany the group. Our medics are there to provide first aid and promote day-to-day welfare on the trip; they carry a robust medical kit, but cannot possibly be equipped with everything needed to counter any given situation. They also provide crucial support to our leaders and, as they are usually found at the back of our groups, are also experts at encouraging you when things get tough.

Who else will accompany the group on this challenge?

Our local support crew is made up of local guides, drivers and cooks. Local guides know the area well, and are a **great source of knowledge** about **local customs and lifestyles**, and the **mountain environment**. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

What are the transport arrangements for the group?

A coach or minibus, depending on the group size, will take you to the trek start point and pick you up at the end. As detailed in your challenge itinerary, there are two internal flights during this trip from Kathmandu to Pokhara and back again. You will be able to leave your travel clothing, celebration meal clothing and anything else that you will not need whilst trekking in your hotel in Kathmandu or Pokhara at the start of your trek.

What will the weather be like?

Weather in spring and autumn is usually clear and dry. In the mountains temperature is influenced heavily by the altitude so please be prepared for all weather types. Never underestimate the power of the sun's rays, even when it feels cold, there is cloud cover or the wind is blowing. Please bring SPF30 as a minimum – preferably higher, along with SPF lip salve too. The higher you trek, the more intense the sun will get and risk of burning is increased. A sun hat and quality sunglasses are a must.

What will I be eating?

The **food** on this trip is fairly local in style, and freshly-cooked. It is tasty and plentiful so it is important that you make sure you are eating well for the long days of trekking. Breakfast will typically consist of porridge/muesli, eggs, toast and jam, tea and coffee. Lunch will vary from day to day and may be a packed lunch or hot lunch in camp. Dinner is once again traditional Nepalese food with lots of vegetable dishes, soups and stews. It is amazing what your cooks will produce for you within the environment you are in.

I have a specific dietary need; will there be enough for me to eat?

Being vegetarian, gluten free, dairy free or having other dietary requirements is usually not a problem provided you **let us know well in advance** (airlines need to know at least 8 weeks prior to the departure). Please do not expect the variety you would have at home – in remote regions certain foods are hard to access. If you feel you aren't getting enough energy because of your dietary requirements please talk to the leaders on the trip – they can't help unless they know there's a problem. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

Do I need to bring snacks?

Bring enough snacks to keep you going each day - around **3-4 tasty treats a day will suffice**. We recommend a combination of slow and fast release snacks such as cereal bars (e.g. Tracker), flapjacks, salted nuts, chocolate bars such as Mars or Snickers, and a packet of sweets. Bringing a combination of treats will keep you interested in snacking as consistent energy levels are important.



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How much do I need to drink?

Due to the nature of the challenge and the hot climate, you will need to drink significantly more in Nepal than you would trekking in the UK. You will be provided with sterilised water at breakfast, lunch and in the evening so keep topping up your water systems. It is a good idea to take plenty of rehydration sachets with you too. We have put water purification tablets on the trip kit list (e.g. chlorine/iodine tablets) as a back-up; while the leaders will be able to sterilise water for you, it is always handy to have in case of emergencies. You will need to drink at least 2-3ltrs of water a day, and you will be carrying this in your day packs so try and get used to trekking with that amount of weight on you when training.

What is the celebration meal?

At the end of your challenge, there will be a special meal to celebrate your achievements. Please check your trip itinerary to confirm whether you will need to set aside funds to pay for this on the night.

What about toilets?

Toilet facilities won't be like home. You will have basic facilities in camp and limited facilities while on the trek, so there may be occasions when you will need to go discretely whilst on the trail. You will need to take baby wipes, nappy sacks and paper in order to make sure you **leave no trace** whilst out on your trek. These can then be discarded in the nearest bin. The toilet facilities in your accommodation may not be up to the standard that you are used to.



What can I do to prevent illness during the challenge?

Illness can spread through the group very quickly when in camp so it's important to bring **antiseptic hand sanitiser** for use after the toilet and before eating to minimise the spread of germs. Also, avoid sharing water bottles and sharing each other's food or sweets as this spreads germs very easily, even if you are being careful.

What if I have any issues during the trip?

Our leaders are very experienced and work very hard to ensure your trip runs as smoothly and enjoyably as possible, and we're sure that you'll have a wonderful time. If you do have any concerns or problems during the trip **please talk to the crew and give them the opportunity to explain or rectify things while they are able**. They are all very approachable!

What will happen in the case of an emergency on this challenge?

The crew will have radios and emergency satellite phones, extensive medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. If you are feeling unwell on this trek, tell your leaders and listen to their advice as your **health and safety** is our top priority.

Will there be Wi-Fi, phone reception and charging points?

The Wi-Fi in the hotel at the start and the end of the challenge may not be as fast as you're used to at home and there won't be any internet access when on the trek itself or at the campsites. The phone reception will be limited and there won't be access to power for charging devices. You may wish to bring your own solar charging device. Treat this challenge like a **'Digital Detox'** and tell your relatives that no news is good news, as the leader will have a satellite phone for emergencies only.

How much money will I need to bring with me?

We usually recommend that you take in the region of £200-£300 but it does depend on how many souvenirs you will want to buy, and if you are getting your visa on arrival. There will be plenty of opportunities to buy souvenirs while you are in Nepal. Out of this spending money, you will need to **set aside funds** to cover any meals which are not included as part of the itinerary, drinks and personal expenses, and money for local crew tips.

If for reasons due to fitness, illness or any unforeseen circumstances, you have to **depart from the group arrangements**, you must ensure that you have enough funds to cover any resultant costs – for example, extra hotel accommodation or meals. Some of these may be recoverable through your travel insurance, depending on your cover and the circumstances.



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What do you recommend for crew tips?

The local crew and porters work incredibly hard for the duration of the trip and it is great if we can show our appreciation in the form of a tip. The guide is around **\$40-\$50** per participant which is split out between the local crew but this is of course at your discretion. Please do not give out individual tips to any local crew who you feel have helped you personally. They work well as a team and those 'out of sight' will be working just as hard as those with you on the trek. Feel free to give away any used or unwanted kit as the porters are always grateful for extra gear. Your trip leader will give you further advice.

Do I need travel insurance?

As part of your booking conditions, it is **compulsory that you ensure you have adequate travel insurance cover** to cover you for trekking. Participants residing in the UK can purchase insurance through our website with Insure2Travel via [this link](#); otherwise you are able to source your own preferred cover with a company of your choosing.

What if this trip does not meet minimum numbers?

Every group needs a minimum number of bookings for it to be feasible to run. Cancelling a trip is rare, and we do our utmost to avoid it. You will be contacted in plenty of time if we are concerned about the group size, and we will discuss options with you.

When will we know the flight details and meeting point?

Discover Adventure will usually confirm the main group flight details 5 months prior to the trip departure so you will know which airport you are travelling from and can arrange suitable transport. You will be sent your **Final Joining Instructions** in the month prior to the trip departure date, within which specific details of **where and when to meet your trip leader** and fellow trekking participants will be confirmed.



Will I need my flight ticket before the trip departure date?

Unless specified otherwise, you do not need to have your flight ticket prior to the trip departure date as this will be given to you by the trip leader or a Discover Adventure representative at the airport. If there are alternative plans, your Challenge Co-ordinator will inform you.

Can I make my own flight arrangements or alter my flight from the main group?

Flights are included on this trip and you will automatically be booked on to the main group flights, unless you let us know otherwise in good time (no later than three months prior to the trip departure). It is possible to make your own flight arrangements and a land only discount will be applied to your transactions when you return the '**Flight Arrangements Form**' (sent at the time of booking).

It is also possible to extend your return journey on the main group flights, but note that you will remain on the same flight path returning from the same airport. There is a flight extension request fee to deviate from the main group flight booking and you will need to return the 'Flight Arrangements Form' with your request. The earlier you return your form to us, the less likely there will be a supplement to pay if the flights are more expensive on your requested day. We will always contact you if this is the case to check whether you are happy to proceed. If you are keen to upgrade your flight, this may be possible at a supplement and you can contact us for an approximate price but please note that this is often very expensive and we will require full payment upfront.

What do I need to bring?

Refer to the **Kit List** sent to you to ensure that you have all the essentials for a comfortable trip. Make sure your walking boots are waterproof and well-worn in. You may also wish to bring some foot powder with you to absorb sweat and help to prevent blisters. Trekking tops of a wicking nature will be more comfortable to walk in than cotton. For cultural sensitivity, it's worth taking a sarong to cover shoulders/knees at times and a small cloth for washing your face. If you intend to trek with poles, ensure that you train with them. Don't forget your charity t-shirt too! If you are still to buy some kit don't forget that Cotswold Outdoor, Snow and Rock, Cycle Surgery and Runners Need offer all Discover Adventure participants **15% off** any purchases you make with them. Please ask us for the code if you do not have this already.



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What is the luggage allowance?

Your main luggage limit on the plane is 20kg with a 5kg allowance for hand luggage, however you will need to travel as lightly as possible as there is a weight limit on the trek itself and your main bag must not weigh more than 8kg. Take only small bottles of toiletries, sun cream, and half a pack of wet wipes, for example. Your main toiletries, travel clothing and anything else that you do not need to take on the mountain can be left in a separate bag at the hotel, so bring something smaller to hold your extras in. Stick to the kit list and you'll manage that with no problems and don't forget that suitcases are not suitable, soft rucksacks/kitbags only (with no wheels on). Discover Adventure Kitbags are specially designed for the rigours of our challenges and are very affordable, please ask for details. Doing a practice pack/weighing your bags before you leave home is very beneficial to make sure you will be able to stick to the limit.

Do I need to carry my own luggage?

Your luggage is transported from camp to camp by the porters. You cannot access your main packs during the day so need to carry a day-pack with your fleece and extra layers, waterproof, sun-cream, hat, camera, water, snacks, etc.

What are the passport and visa requirements?

A valid 10-year passport is essential; with at least six months remaining before expiry.

You will require a Tourist Visa to enter Nepal and you can either apply for this prior to departure or upon arrival to the country. For UK nationals, please refer to the foreign travel advice [given here](#) for more information and the onward links to follow to the Nepal Visa Application Service Centre. Visitors may also obtain the tourist visa on arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA), Kathmandu. The requirements on arrival are: 2 passport size photos, completed prescribed visa form available at entry point and visa fee which is currently \$25. You can only pay in \$US and the process is usually very quick and simple. If you are a foreign national or British but living in another country, please refer to your local Nepalese Embassy for details on how to obtain your visa and if you need any information from us, do get in touch as soon as possible. If you would like to use a visa agency, we work with the Visa Machine (follow [this link](#) for more information).

How can I find out more about the requirement for vaccinations?

You will need to ensure that you have the vaccinations required for this trip prior to travel. You can find some guidance and information on the www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk website. Always consult your local GP or travel clinic for the latest health advice, as they are aware of any updates in World Health Travel requirements.

Passenger Portal

We have a **Passenger Portal** which will enable you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - [Passenger Portal Log in](#).

Download the app!

We use the **VAMOOS travel app** that can be downloaded from the App store to your smartphone. The app can be used offline, and allows you to access all of your challenge documents from your phone. Just download the app and enter your unique code at the prompt (**please ask for your specific code if you do not have it**).



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