

Earthbound Expeditions

Annapurna Luxury Trek, Lodge to Lodge

10 days, from US$1,967 per person

Duration
10 days

Grade
Easy

Max altitude
1,950 m

Start and end
Kathmandu

On the trail
3 to 5 hours a day

Best season
Mar to May, Oct to Nov

Accommodation
Luxury lodges

Meals
All meals on the trek

Group size
4 to 12

Getting there
Fly to Pokhara

Annapurna Luxury Trek, Lodge to Lodge Overview

Five short days of walking between four luxury lodges in the Annapurna foothills, with Annapurna South and Machhapuchhre in view throughout and a highest point of 1,950 m.

A Himalayan trek without altitude concerns

The highest point of this trip is Ghandruk, at 1,950 m, which is lower than many European ski resorts and below the height at which altitude sickness becomes a consideration. The trek is designed around this. On our other treks you need to manage your acclimatisation; on this one you walk between four lodges in the Annapurna foothills with the high peaks directly above you. Altitude is not a reason to turn back on this route.

What luxury means on this trail

At Ghandruk, Jhinu, Tolkha and Dhampus there is a purpose-built lodge with proper beds, private bathrooms, reliable hot water and meals prepared in a proper kitchen. On the higher treks, this level of comfort ends at around 4,000 m because no lodges of this kind have been built higher up. On this route it is available throughout, because the whole trek lies within the altitude range where these lodges exist.

Close mountain views

Annapurna South, Hiunchuli and Machhapuchhre rise directly above the ridge you walk along, so from Ghandruk and again from Dhampus you can see a wall of snow-covered peaks from a terrace below 2,000 m. The size of the view does not depend on your altitude, and the Annapurna foothills show this more clearly than anywhere else in Nepal.

Who this trip is for

Travellers who want to see the Himalaya without an endurance challenge, families with children, people with knee problems, those with ten days rather than three weeks, and couples who want comfortable accommodation at the end of each day. It is not a substitute for Annapurna Base Camp or Everest Base Camp. It is a good trip that also happens to be easy.

Key highlights of the Annapurna Luxury Trek, Lodge to Lodge

- Annapurna South and Machhapuchhre from the terrace at Dhampus
- A night in the Gurung village of Ghandruk
- Natural hot springs on the Modi Khola at Jhinu Danda
- Two nights by the lake in Pokhara, and the UNESCO sites of the Kathmandu Valley

Itinerary

Day	Route	Hours	Distance	Altitude
1	Arrive Kathmandu	-	-	1,400 m
2	Kathmandu valley sites	-	-	1,400 m
3	Fly to Pokhara, drive to Nayapul, walk to Ghandruk	1½–2 hrs walking	-	1,950 m
4	Ghandruk to Jhinu Danda	4–5 hrs	8 km	1,070 m

5	Jhinu Danda to Tolkha	4–5 hrs	9 km	1,570 m
6	Tolkha to Dhampus	3–4 hrs	7 km	1,650 m
7	Dhampus to Phedi, drive to Pokhara	2 hrs walking	-	800 m
8	Pokhara, lake and caves	-	-	800 m
9	Fly to Kathmandu	-	-	1,400 m
10	Fly home	-	-	-

Day 1

Arrive in Kathmandu

You are met at the airport and driven to a five-star hotel. In the evening we brief you on the trip over dinner. The briefing takes about twenty minutes rather than an hour, because there is no altitude plan to explain and no equipment to weigh.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, arrival day Night: Five-star hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Dinner

Day 2

Kathmandu Valley sightseeing

Swayambhunath above the city, Pashupatinath on the river, Boudhanath and its stupa, and Patan Durbar Square in the afternoon. Four UNESCO World Heritage Sites in one day, with a guide who can explain the religious art, in a private car, with entry fees included.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Five-star hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast

Day 3

Fly to Pokhara and trek to Ghandruk

A 25-minute flight over the hills to Pokhara, where the trekking crew joins us, then a private vehicle to the road head beyond Nayapul. From there it is ninety minutes to two hours uphill to Ghandruk, a Gurung village of slate roofs and stone lanes directly below Annapurna South.

Altitude: 1,950 m On foot: 1½–2 hrs Night: Luxury lodge, Ghandruk Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4

Trek from Ghandruk to Jhinu Danda and the hot springs

A long descent through terraces and forest to the Modi Khola, losing most of the height gained the day before. Twenty minutes below the lodge are natural hot pools beside the river. It is a memorable day, and a reminder that walking downhill is not necessarily easy.

Altitude: 1,070 m On foot: 4–5 hrs Night: Luxury lodge, Jhinu Danda Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5

Trek from Jhinu Danda to Tolkha

Back up out of the river gorge and along the hillside through Landruk, walking between villages and rice terraces, with the valley opening out below and the mountains above. A steady day with more ascent than descent.

Altitude: 1,570 m On foot: 4–5 hrs Night: Luxury lodge, Tolkha Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6

Trek from Tolkha to Dhampus

The shortest walking day, to the ridge at Dhampus, the main viewpoint of this trek. From a terrace at 1,650 m you can see Annapurna South, Hiunchuli, Machhapuchhre and Lamjung Himal along the skyline, and the afternoon is free to watch the light change on the mountains.

Altitude: 1,650 m On foot: 3–4 hrs Night: Luxury lodge, Dhampus Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7

Trek to Phedi and drive to Pokhara

Two hours down to the road at Phedi, then a short drive to Pokhara, arriving in time for lunch by the lake. The afternoon is free: you might have a massage, take a boat out, or relax by Phewa Tal.

Altitude: 800 m On foot: 2 hrs Night: Five-star hotel, Pokhara Meals: Breakfast

Day 8

Pokhara sightseeing

A boat trip across Phewa Tal to the Tal Barahi temple, then Davis Falls and the Gupteshwor cave below it. The morning is the time for a mountain flight along the range or a tandem paraglide from Sarangkot, both of which are optional extras rather than included.

Altitude: 800 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Five-star hotel, Pokhara Meals: Breakfast

Day 9

Fly back to Kathmandu

The short flight back over the foothills, a free afternoon in Thamel for any last shopping, and a farewell dinner with a Nepali cultural programme in the evening.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, flight day Night: Five-star hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 10

Departure

Transfer to the airport for your international flight. If you are continuing to Chitwan or Bhutan, your next trip starts here instead.

Altitude: - On foot: None, departure day Night: No overnight Meals: Breakfast

What's included

- Airport transfers & ground transport
- Licensed English-speaking guide
- Accommodation throughout the trip
- All permits & national park fees
- Meals as per the itinerary
- Four-star hotels in Kathmandu, upgraded from three
- Single ensuite room wherever the route has one
- One porter per traveller rather than one between two
- Domestic flights in place of the longest road transfers
- Down jacket and sleeping bag provided
- Farewell dinner in Kathmandu

Not included

- International flights
- Travel & rescue insurance
- Tips & personal expenses
- Nepal entry visa (on arrival)

Permits and other costs

Permit	Fee	Issued by
Annapurna Conservation Area permit (ACAP). SAARC nationals pay NPR 1,000. Checked at Birethanti on the way in. Included in your price and arranged for you.	NPR 3,000, about $22	Kathmandu or Pokhara, before you start
TIMS card. Individual trekkers have not been able to obtain one since April 2023. SAARC nationals pay NPR 1,000.	NPR 2,000, about $15	Through a registered trekking agency only
Licensed guide. Required by law for foreign trekkers in the conservation area since April 2023, and enforced at the Birethanti checkpoint.	Inside the trek price	-

Other cost	Amount	Note
Five-star hotel, Kathmandu and Pokhara	$180–260 a night	Five nights in total across the two cities. This is the largest single cost of the trip
Luxury lodges, Ghandruk to Dhampus	$120–190 a night	Four nights. An ordinary teahouse on the same ridge costs $5 to $12
Kathmandu to Pokhara flight, both ways	$120–180	25 minutes each way. The coach costs $20 and takes six hours, and we can book it if you prefer
Private vehicle throughout	$40–70 a day	Airport transfers, both sightseeing days and both trailhead transfers
ACAP permit	$22	NPR 3,000. SAARC nationals NPR 1,000
TIMS card	$15	NPR 2,000, issued only through a registered agency
Food on the trek	$35–50 a day	All included, prepared in lodge kitchens
Licensed guide	$30–40 a day	Plus their food and lodging, for all ten days rather than only the walking days
Porter, one per traveller	$20–25 a day	One per person. On a trek this short there is little to carry, so you can walk with only a daypack

Kathmandu and Pokhara sightseeing	$90–130	Monument and park entry fees on days 2 and 8, all included
Travel insurance	$60–110	Ordinary travel cover is enough. No high-altitude or helicopter cover is needed
Tips, guide and porter	$100–150	Per traveller, at the end

Packing list

No strict weight limits

There is no Lukla flight and no helicopter, so there is no 15 kg limit and nothing is weighed. The Pokhara flight allows 20 kg of checked baggage plus hand baggage, which is more than most people bring. Your porter carries up to 20 kg, and on a five-day walk your bag is unlikely to be close to that. Pack for two cities and five days of easy walking, and bring a good camera.

On your head

- Sun hat with a brim, and a warm hat that covers your ears
- Two buffs or neck gaiters
- Sunglasses, category 3. The sun is stronger than the temperature suggests
- Head torch and spare batteries
- Sunscreen SPF 50 and lip balm with sun protection

On your body

- Three or four merino or synthetic base layers, no cotton
- Two mid layers; fleece is enough
- A light down or synthetic jacket for the evenings
- A waterproof jacket and trousers that pack small
- Two pairs of trekking trousers, one lined
- Underwear for four or five days, washed along the way

Hands and feet

- Light gloves, and a warmer pair for the mornings
- Trekking boots with ankle support, already broken in. This is essential
- Four pairs of wool trekking socks
- Camp shoes or trainers for the evenings
- Gaiters, if you are trekking in winter or early spring

Bags

- Duffel bag for the porter, 20 kg maximum. We provide one
- Daypack, 30 to 35 litres, with a rain cover
- Dry bags or thick liners. Rucksacks do not stay waterproof for long on a Himalayan trail

Sleeping

- Sleeping bag rated to minus 10°C. We provide one
- Silk or cotton liner, for warmth and hygiene
- Earplugs. Teahouse walls are thin plywood

Health

- Personal first aid: blister plasters, tape, painkillers, rehydration salts
- Any medication you take regularly, in its original packaging
- Water purification: tablets, a filter, or a SteriPen
- Hand sanitiser and wet wipes
- Throat lozenges. Most people develop a dry cough at high altitude

Papers and money

- Passport valid for six months, plus two photocopies
- Four passport photographs for permits
- Travel insurance certificate showing trekking cover to your maximum altitude
- $100 to $150 in small notes. The last cash machine is in Pokhara

Not needed on this trek

- A sleeping bag. There are duvets at every stop, and we do not provide one for this trip
- A down jacket. A fleece and a light waterproof jacket are enough every night on this route outside December and January
- Crampons, gaiters or snow poles. There is no snow on this trail in the seasons we run it
- Water purification beyond a backup. Filtered water is free at all four lodges
- Altitude medication. The route is not high enough to need it

Altitude profile

Day	Place	Sleep at	Highest point
1	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-
2	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-
3	Ghandruk	1,950 m	-
4	Jhinu Danda	1,070 m	-
5	Tolkha	1,570 m	-
6	Dhampus	1,650 m	-
7	Pokhara	800 m	-
8	Pokhara	800 m	-
9	Kathmandu	1,400 m	-

Pokhara flights

You fly from Kathmandu to Pokhara and back, 25 minutes each way, into an airport on flat ground. Unlike Lukla, these flights are rarely disrupted for long.

Flying to Pokhara

The flight from Kathmandu takes 25 minutes and lands at a full-sized airport on flat ground at 830 m, unlike the airstrip at Lukla. Weather delays do happen, but they are usually measured in hours rather than days. On the Everest treks a closed airstrip can cost three days of an itinerary; here, the worst case is that you drive instead and arrive the same evening.

Travelling by road

The drive from Kathmandu to Pokhara takes six to seven hours on the Prithvi Highway along the Trishuli river. Some travellers prefer to see the countryside, and because nothing on this trip depends on the timing, it is a reasonable alternative to flying. It also saves the cost of the flight, which we refund to you. Let us know which you prefer when you book.

The changing trailhead

Treks used to start at Nayapul, but the jeep track now runs well beyond it, which shortens the first afternoon. We drive as far as the road is passable on your dates and start walking from there. In practice, day 3 involves ninety minutes to two hours of walking, uphill, wherever the road ends.

The Annapurna mountain flight

The scenic flight that some itineraries include on day 3 is a flight along the Annapurna range from Pokhara, not the transfer from Kathmandu to Pokhara. It takes an hour and depends on the weather. We list it under optional extras rather than including it in the price, because in clear October weather the view from Dhampus on day 6 is better, and free.

Accommodation

Lodges on the trek

The four nights on the trail are spent in purpose-built luxury lodges at Ghandruk, Jhinu Danda, Tolkha and Dhampus. Each has twin or double rooms with proper beds, a private bathroom with a hot shower, and meals prepared in the lodge kitchen. The Ghandruk lodge is in a Gurung village, the Jhinu Danda lodge is above the hot springs, and the Dhampus lodge is on a terrace facing the Annapurnas. Because the whole route stays below 2,000 m, the same level of comfort is available throughout, unlike on the higher treks.

Hotels in Kathmandu and Pokhara

In Kathmandu and Pokhara you stay in five-star hotels, in deluxe rooms with a private bathroom and a bath. The Pokhara rooms face the lake.

Where	Nights	Type	Room	Bathroom
Kathmandu	3	Five-star hotel	Deluxe double or twin	Private, hot water and a bath
Ghandruk	1	Luxury lodge, Gurung village	Twin or double	Private, hot shower

Jhinu Danda	1	Luxury lodge above the hot springs	Twin or double	Private, hot shower
Tolkha	1	Luxury lodge	Twin or double	Private, hot shower
Dhampus	1	Luxury lodge, facing the Annapurna range	Twin or double	Private, hot shower
Pokhara	2	Five-star hotel, lakeside	Deluxe double or twin, lake view	Private, hot water and a bath

Heating
The lodges are between 1,000 m and 1,950 m, where nights are cool rather than cold, so rooms have blankets and a heater on request, rather than a single stove in the dining room as in a high-altitude teahouse. In December and January, ask for the heater.

Hot shower
Private, en suite and included at every stop, without exception.

Charging
Free, in your room, at every stop. Bring a plug adapter; a power bank is not needed.

Wifi
Included at all four lodges and in both cities, and usually good enough for a video call. The connection at Ghandruk is the weakest.

Phone signal
Ncell and NTC cover the whole route. You can buy a SIM card at Kathmandu airport.

Water
Filtered water is provided free at every lodge. Please refill your bottle rather than buying bottled water.

Bedding
Proper beds, duvets and mattresses throughout. No sleeping bag is needed on this trek, and we do not provide one.

Laundry
Included: same-day in Pokhara and next-day at the lodges.

Meals

Meal	Time	What it is like
Breakfast	7:00–7:30	Porridge, Tibetan bread, eggs, chapati, pancakes, tea or coffee
Lunch	12:00–13:00	Dal bhat, fried rice, noodles, soup, momo, and potato dishes
Dinner	18:30–19:30	Dal bhat, pasta, thukpa, curry and rice, soup to start
Tea	on arrival	Black, milk, lemon, ginger, or masala. Included at every stop.

Diet	How we manage it
Vegetarian	Easy throughout. Dal bhat is vegetarian and is the best dish on the menu.
Vegan	Manageable with notice. Tell us when you book so the guide can order in advance.
Gluten free	Rice, dal, potatoes and eggs are safe. Bread, noodles and momo are not, and cross-contamination in a teahouse kitchen cannot be ruled out.

Halal	There is no certified halal kitchen on the route. Vegetarian food is the practical option.
Meat	Available. Note that meat is carried up to the lodges for two days without refrigeration.

A typical day

Time	What happens
6:00	Tea in your room, and a bowl of warm water to wash in
6:30	Pack, and put the duffel outside your door for the porter
7:00	Breakfast together in the dining room
8:00	On the trail. The guide sets a steady, slow pace
12:00	Lunch at a teahouse on the route, about an hour
13:00	Two to four hours more, depending on the day
15:30	Arrive at the lodge, tea, check in, wash, and rest if you need to
17:00	Oxygen saturation and pulse taken, and written down
18:30	Dinner, and the guide briefs you on the next day
20:30	Bedtime. At 4,000 m most people are asleep by nine

Difficulty and preparation

The main physical demand of this trek is stone staircases. If you can walk for four hours, including going up and down stairs, you are ready.

Difficulty 1 of 5

The easiest trek we offer, and the only one with no altitude risk.

- Three to five hours of walking a day for five days. The longest day is under five hours, and no day is much longer than the one before.
- Nothing above 1,950 m, so no acclimatisation, no rest day and no risk of altitude sickness.
- Stone staircases are the main demand. The descent to Jhinu on day 4 drops nearly 900 m, and walking down stairs is what people feel the next morning.
- A porter carries your bag. You walk with a daypack for water, a warm layer and a camera.
- No ropes, no crampons, no exposed sections, and no snow on the trail in the seasons we run the trek.

Getting ready

6 weeks before: Hill walking

Two or three walks a week of an hour or more, including at least one on hilly ground. If you already walk regularly at weekends, you have already completed this step.

4 weeks before: Stair training
The Annapurna foothills have many stone staircases, and the best preparation is to practise on stairs. Find a long flight and walk up and down it. Twenty minutes twice a week is enough, and it is the most useful step on this list.

2 weeks before: One long day
A single four-hour walk with a daypack, so that you are used to the length of the walking days. Wear the boots you are bringing, and include descents as well as climbs.

1 week before: Rest
Do not break in new boots, start a new training plan or change anything. Walk gently, sleep well and arrive rested. On a trek this gentle, arriving tired is the main thing that would make it hard.

Weather by month

These are foothill temperatures rather than mountain ones. The figures below are for the ridge where you sleep, between 1,000 m and 2,000 m, and they are mild in every month the trek runs.

Month	Day on the ridge	Night on the ridge	Night at Ghandruk	Conditions	Note
January	14°C	3°C	1°C	Good	Cold mornings, excellent visibility, and very few trekkers. Ask for a room heater.
February	17°C	5°C	3°C	Good	Warming quickly and still very clear. A good month on this route that is often overlooked.
March	21°C	8°C	6°C	Best	The rhododendron forest above Ghandruk comes into flower. Very good walking conditions.
April	24°C	11°C	9°C	Best	The best month on this route. Warm, with the forest in full flower, and the mountains clear most mornings.
May	26°C	14°C	12°C	Good	Warm and increasingly hazy. Cloud builds in the afternoon, so the mountains are best seen in the morning.
June	27°C	17°C	15°C	Hard	The monsoon arrives. Leeches in the forest sections, heavy cloud and no mountain views.
July	27°C	18°C	16°C	We do not run it	Full monsoon. We do not run this trek.
August	27°C	18°C	16°C	We do not run it	Full monsoon. We do not run this trek.
September	26°C	15°C	13°C	Good	The monsoon clears through the month. From about the 20th it is reliably good.

October	23°C	11°C	9°C	Best	The clearest air of the year and the busiest trail. Book the lodges early.
November	20°C	7°C	5°C	Best	Still clear, quieter than October, and cool enough to walk in comfort all day.
December	16°C	4°C	2°C	Good	Cold at night and clear by day. The lodges are half empty and the mountains are visible.

Averages from Nepal DHM station data for the Annapurna foothills between 1,000 m and 2,000 m. Unlike the high treks, the coldest row on this table is still above freezing.

Guides and porters

Your guide

A senior government-licensed guide leads every departure and stays with you for all ten days, in the cities as well as on the trail. On less expensive Annapurna trips, a city driver usually hands you over to the trekking guide at Nayapul. There is one porter per traveller. On a trek this gentle, the main benefit of the porters is that you can walk without a heavy load and enjoy the views.

Porters and luggage

Each porter carries a maximum of 20 kg, which is your duffel bag and one other. This is below the 25 kg limit set by the trekking association and well below the loads you will see on the trail. If your bag is overweight, the load is divided rather than added to. Porters carry the main luggage, not daypacks: you carry your own water, camera, jacket and snacks for the day.

Staff pay and insurance

Salary, insurance, food and lodging for every guide and porter are included in the price you pay, and are not collected separately on the trail. Every member of the team is insured for altitude and helicopter evacuation on the same terms we require of you. Paying fair wages and insurance through the trip price is how we ensure our porters are properly equipped and not overloaded.

Tipping

Tipping is customary but not compulsory, and it never replaces wages. For this trip, $100 to $150 per traveller for the whole team is usual, given together on the last evening rather than daily. Your guide will not ask for a tip, and would prefer that it is not given in front of the group.

Responsible travel

Drinking water

A traveller drinking bottled water uses around 20 plastic bottles on this trip, and every one has to be carried in and carried out again. Boiled water is available at every lodge for one or two dollars a litre, and we encourage you to use it. Bring purification tablets or a filter as a backup.

Waste

We carry out everything we bring in that is not food. The Annapurna foothills, including the Gurung villages of Ghandruk and Dhampus, have a waste problem, and we make sure we do not add to it.

Supporting local communities

The lodges are family businesses in the villages you pass through, and the guides and porters live in this district. The ACAP fee funds the Annapurna Conservation Area Project, a conservation trust rather than a government department, which runs the micro-hydro schemes, the waste schemes and the lodge standards on this route. Almost all of what you pay is spent within a few days' walk of the trail. This is one reason to book with a Nepali operator rather than a foreign one that subcontracts the trek locally.

Local customs

Ask before photographing anyone. When you meet a mule train, stand on the mountain side of the path, not the side with the drop, and let it pass. Monasteries welcome visitors, but they are places of worship: remove your hat and shoes, and if a service is taking place, wait.

Booking and payment

How to book

Write to us or send a message on WhatsApp with your dates. Please include the size of your party in your first message: this trip runs for four or more people and the lodges are small, so for October dates availability depends on beds rather than price.

Deposit

A deposit of 30 per cent secures your dates, and the balance is paid when you arrive in Kathmandu, in cash or by card. At the same time, we ask for a copy of your passport, your insurance certificate and any dietary or medical information.

Payment

You can pay by bank transfer, or by card through a secure link. Card payments carry the bank's fee of about 4 per cent, which we show you before you pay. The balance in Kathmandu can be paid in US dollars, pounds, euros or Nepali rupees.

Cancellation

If you cancel more than 30 days before departure, your deposit can be transferred to any other date or trip we run, with no time limit. If you cancel within 30 days, the deposit is retained, because the permits, flights and crew have been booked by then. If we cancel for any reason other than weather, we refund everything you have paid.

Private and group departures

For a party of five or more, private and group departures cost the same. A private departure runs on your dates at your pace and can be arranged for one person. A group departure runs on the dates in the table above. Most travellers book privately, at no extra cost.

Late bookings

Three weeks' notice is enough for most of the year. October and early November are the exception, because lodge rooms rather than flights are limited: there are only four lodges, each with a few dozen rooms. For an October departure we need three months' notice.

Optional extras

Annapurna mountain flight

$215, 1 morning

A one-hour flight along the range from Pokhara, with a guaranteed window seat. Best taken on day 8, when you already know the names of the peaks you are looking at.

Paragliding at Sarangkot

$95, 1 morning

A tandem flight from the ridge above Pokhara, twenty to thirty minutes over Phewa Lake. Pokhara is one of the best places in the world for paragliding, and day 8 has time for it.

Poon Hill extension

from $340, +2 days

Two extra days to add the Ghorepani ridge and the sunrise from Poon Hill at 3,210 m, joining this route at Ghandruk. This is the only option that takes the trek significantly higher.

Kathmandu Valley in depth

$140, 1 day

Bhaktapur, Patan and Boudhanath with a guide who can explain the religious art, and a private car. Day 2 already includes a shorter version of this tour.

Chitwan luxury safari

from $690, +3 days

Travel to the lowland jungle to see rhinos, staying in a lodge rather than a camp. It combines well with this trip, as neither is physically demanding.

Single room throughout

$390

A room to yourself in both cities and at all four lodges. Unlike on the high-altitude treks, every stop on this route can provide a single room.

Frequently asked questions

Answers to the 16 questions travellers ask us most often. If your question is not here, contact us and we will answer it.

Is this a proper trek or a walking holiday?

It is a proper trek on the main trail: the same stone paths, the same Gurung villages and the same daily routine of walking from lodge to lodge as the harder Annapurna routes. It is not an endurance challenge. You walk three to five hours a day, sleep in a proper bed every night, and the highest point is 1,950 m. You walk through the Himalaya below Annapurna South, without the physical demands of a high-altitude trek.

How does it compare with Annapurna Base Camp?

They share the first day and then follow different routes. Annapurna Base Camp takes fourteen days, climbs to 4,130 m, uses ordinary teahouses with shared bathrooms for two weeks, and ends in a ring of high peaks. This trek takes ten days, reaches 1,950 m and is comfortable at every stop. Base Camp is the greater mountain experience, while this trek is the more comfortable holiday. They cost about the same, because the accommodation on this trek is the main expense.

Can I bring children, or parents in their seventies?

Yes, and this is the only trek we offer where we say so without conditions. There is no altitude to manage, the days are short, a vehicle is never more than a few hours away, and every night ends with a hot shower and a proper bed. The one thing to consider is the stone staircases, which are hard on the knees both going up and coming down. Let us know if this is a concern and we will adjust the descent on day 4.

How fit do I need to be?

You need to be able to walk for four hours, including many stairs up and down. That is the only requirement. You do not need previous trekking experience, altitude experience or gym training. The training section above has four short steps, and the most useful one is stair practice.

Does this trek go to Poon Hill?

Not as standard. The route runs through Ghandruk, Jhinu, Tolkha and Dhampus, the lodge circuit on the near side of the ridge, and does not go north to Ghorepani. Poon Hill and its sunrise at 3,210 m are available as a two-day extension from Ghandruk, listed under the optional extras above. It is the only part of this trip that takes you significantly higher, and it is worth considering if altitude was not the reason you chose this trek.

Why does the trek descend on day 4?

Because the hot springs are at the bottom of the valley. Ghandruk is at 1,950 m and Jhinu Danda at 1,070 m, so day 4 is a long descent to the Modi Khola and a set of natural hot pools beside the river. It is a memorable day, and a reminder that walking downhill is not necessarily easy. You regain most of the height over the following two days.

How many of the ten days are spent walking?

Five. Two days are in Kathmandu at the start, two are in Pokhara in the middle and at the end, and one is the flight home. This balance is intentional: the cities have the UNESCO sites and the lake, and on a ten-day trip most people want to see both.

Is the accommodation five-star?

In Kathmandu and Pokhara, yes, in the usual international sense. On the trail, no. The four lodges are by far the best buildings on the ridge, with private bathrooms, reliable hot water, heating on request and a proper kitchen, and elsewhere they would be good four-star country hotels.

Is there wifi and phone signal the whole way?

Almost all the way. All four lodges have wifi included, usually good enough for a video call, with Ghandruk the weakest. Ncell and NTC cover the entire route. This is a foothill trek an hour from a city, not a remote high-altitude region.

What happens if it rains?

You walk in it, and at the end of the day you arrive at a lodge with a hot shower and a drying room. We only run the trek outside the monsoon, so prolonged rain is unlikely, but the foothills get more cloud than the high valleys, and an afternoon shower in April or October is normal.

Why does this ten-day trek cost about the same as the fourteen-day Annapurna Base Camp trek?

Because most of the cost is accommodation and flights rather than days on the trail. Nine nights in five-star hotels and luxury lodges cost roughly ten times as much as the same number of nights in teahouses, and that accounts for most of the difference. The cost breakdown above shows the details. The trekking itself is the least expensive part of any trek, and this trip has less of it.

What is not included?

International flights, travel insurance, tips, lunches and dinners on the city days, and personal spending. Everything on the trek itself is covered: all meals, all lodges, the permits, the guide, one porter per person, the domestic flights and every transfer. The full list of exclusions is given further up this page.

Can you run the trek for two people, or for one?

Yes, at the prices in the group table above. The published price of $1,967 is the rate for four to twelve people, and the departures on this page run at that price. With fewer than four, the guide, vehicle and rooms are no longer shared, so the price is $2,190 each for two people and $2,680 for one.

Do I need a sleeping bag or a down jacket?

No, you need neither, and this is the only trek we offer where that is the case. Every stop has a duvet and a proper mattress. A fleece and a light waterproof jacket are enough for every evening outside December and January, when a warm layer is useful on the terraces at Ghandruk and Dhampus.

Do I need insurance that covers helicopter rescue?

Not for altitude, because the route is low. Ordinary travel insurance with medical cover is enough, without the high-altitude cover required for the Everest and Base Camp treks. We still require evacuation cover, as we would anywhere in Nepal, but the more expensive high-altitude cover is not needed for this route.

How far in advance should I book?

Three weeks' notice is enough for most of the year. October and early November are the exception, because beds are limited: there are four small lodges on this route, so October dates are usually booked three months in advance rather than three weeks.

Photos, videos and reviews of this trip: earthbound.rajansimkhada.com/luxury-annapurna-trek