

Earthbound Expeditions

Nepal Soft Adventure

12 days, from US$1,087 per person

Duration **12 days**	Grade **Easy to moderate**	Max altitude **3,210 m**
Start and end **Kathmandu**	On the trail **4 to 7 hours a day**	Best season **Oct to Apr**
Accommodation **Hotels and teahouses**	Meals **All meals on the trek**	Group size **Private, from 2**
Getting around **Vehicle, raft and flight**		

Nepal Soft Adventure Overview

Two days in the cities of the Kathmandu Valley, a day rafting the Trishuli with a night camping on the riverbank, and five days on the Ghorepani trail with a sunrise view of ten peaks from 3,210 m.

Trek overview

This twelve-day trip combines three different experiences of Nepal: two days in the medieval cities of the Kathmandu Valley, two days rafting the Trishuli with a night on a sandy beach, and five days on the Ghorepani and Ghandruk teahouse trail, with a sunrise at 3,210 m. No previous experience is needed, but you need a reasonable level of fitness.

Why the itinerary is in this order

Many travellers arrive tired and start walking too soon. On this trip the cities come first, and the rafting day requires little effort. By the time you reach the trailhead on day 5, you have been in the country for four days and have recovered from jet lag, which makes the trek more enjoyable.

Why this trail

The Ghorepani and Ghandruk trail is one of the most welcoming in Nepal. There is a teahouse every hour, views of the Annapurnas from many of them, two days of rhododendron forest, hot springs at the end, and no altitude high enough to cause illness. More people have made their first Himalayan trek on this route than on any other in the country.

Who this trip is for

First-time visitors, couples, families with teenagers, and anyone who wants to walk in Nepal without spending three weeks on it. If you have never trekked before, this is the trip we recommend, although day 6 is demanding.

Key highlights of the Nepal Soft Adventure

- A day of grade three water on the Trishuli, and a night camping on a river beach
- Five days on the Ghorepani and Ghandruk teahouse trail, one of the most welcoming in Nepal
- Sunrise from Poon Hill at 3,210 m, with Dhaulagiri and the Annapurna range in one view
- The hot springs at Jhinu Danda in the river gorge on the last afternoon of the trek
- The Kathmandu Valley cities at the start, so that you are familiar with the country before the trek

Itinerary

Day	Route	Hours	Distance	Altitude
1	Arrive Kathmandu	-	-	1,400 m
2	The valley: three squares and Boudhanath	4	-	1,400 m
3	Raft the Trishuli to the river camp	4 to 5	27 km	300 m
4	River to Kurintar, drive to Pokhara	4	125 km	820 m
5	Nayapul to Tikhedhunga	4	9 km	1,540 m

6	Tikhedhunga to Ghorepani	6 to 7	12 km	2,850 m
7	Poon Hill, then Tadapani	6	13 km	2,630 m
8	Tadapani to Jhinu Danda	6	14 km	1,780 m
9	Jhinu to Nayapul, drive to Pokhara	4 to 5	13 km	820 m
10	Pokhara, the lake and the pagoda	2	-	820 m
11	Fly to Kathmandu, afternoon in Bhaktapur	25 min	-	1,400 m
12	Fly home	-	-	1,400 m

Day 1

Arrive in Kathmandu

We meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel. There are no activities today. In the evening we brief you on the trip over dinner and check your equipment, as the trekking section needs boots and a warm layer and the rafting section needs neither.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, arrival day Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Dinner

Day 2

Kathmandu Valley sightseeing

Swayambhunath early in the morning while the pilgrims walk around it, Kathmandu Durbar Square in the late morning, and Patan in the afternoon, the finest and least crowded of the three squares. We finish at Boudhanath at the time the lamps are lit, when several thousand people walk the kora together.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: 4 hours on foot Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast

Day 3

Raft the Trishuli and camp on the riverbank

A three-hour drive west out of the valley to the starting point at Charaudi, followed by a thorough safety briefing and then four or five hours on grade two and three water, with rapids named Upset and Ladies' Delight. In the late afternoon we stop at a beach, pitch tents on the sand and eat around a campfire.

Altitude: 300 m On foot: None, 3 hr drive, then rafting Night: River camp, Trishuli Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Day 4

Raft to Kurintar and drive to Pokhara

A shorter morning on the water to the finishing point at Kurintar, then a four-hour drive north-west to Pokhara along the Seti river. The afternoon is free by the lake, where you can walk to the water's edge to see whether the mountains are visible.

Altitude: 820 m On foot: None, 4 hr drive Night: Hotel by the lake, Pokhara Meals: Breakfast, lunch

Day 5

Drive to Nayapul and trek to Tikhedhunga

A ninety-minute drive to the trailhead at Nayapul and the permit check at Birethanti, followed by an easy first afternoon up the Bhurungdi Khola through rice terraces and villages. The walk takes four hours with no significant climbing, and the first teahouse of the trip has a view up the valley.

Altitude: 1,540 m On foot: 4 hours Night: Teahouse, Tikhedhunga Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Day 6

Trek from Tikhedhunga to Ghorepani via Ulleri

This is the hardest day of the trek, early in the route. The first two hours climb 3,300 stone steps to Ulleri, taken slowly, followed by an easier afternoon through rhododendron forest to Ghorepani at 2,850 m. It is cold at night, there is a wood stove in the dining room, and most people are in bed by half past eight.

Altitude: 2,850 m On foot: 6 to 7 hours Night: Teahouse, Ghorepani Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Day 7

Sunrise at Poon Hill and trek to Tadapani

We get up at half past four for the forty-five-minute climb to Poon Hill at 3,210 m, the most photographed sunrise viewpoint in Nepal. The view covers two hundred degrees and includes Dhaulagiri, Annapurna South, Hiunchuli, Machhapuchhre and other peaks. We return for breakfast and then walk east along the ridge through moss-covered forest to Tadapani.

Altitude: 2,630 m On foot: 6 hours Night: Teahouse, Tadapani Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Day 8

Trek from Tadapani to Jhinu Danda and the hot springs

A long descent through Gurung villages to Chhomrong, with Machhapuchhre close on your left all morning, and then down to Jhinu. Twenty minutes further down the gorge are three stone pools of hot water beside the Modi Khola, a welcome rest after four days of walking.

Altitude: 1,780 m On foot: 6 hours Night: Teahouse, Jhinu Danda Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Day 9

Trek from Jhinu to Nayapul and drive to Pokhara

An easy final morning down the Modi Khola to the road, mostly on level ground, passing the terraces of Ghandruk on the far bank. The jeep meets us at Nayapul and we are back at the lake by mid-afternoon, with time for a shower, a boat trip and a meal other than dal bhat.

Altitude: 820 m On foot: 4 to 5 hours Night: Hotel by the lake, Pokhara Meals: Breakfast, lunch

Day 10

Free day in Pokhara

You can watch the sunrise from Sarangkot for one more mountain view, or have a late start. Options include a boat across Phewa Tal to the World Peace Pagoda, the Tibetan settlement at Tashiling, Devi's Fall, or simply relaxing. Paragliding from Sarangkot is a popular extra, and we book it the day before.

Altitude: 820 m On foot: 2 hours Night: Hotel by the lake, Pokhara Meals: Breakfast

Day 11

Fly to Kathmandu and visit Bhaktapur

A twenty-five-minute flight with the mountains visible from the left-hand windows. Instead of returning to Thamel, we spend the afternoon in Bhaktapur, the best-preserved of the three cities, which most visitors see only briefly. A final dinner in Kathmandu in the evening.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: 2 hours on foot Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast, dinner

Day 12

Departure

A free morning for anything you have not yet seen, and a transfer to the airport three hours before your flight. If you are staying longer, this is a good day for the Everest scenic flight or a Chitwan extension.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, departure day Night: No overnight Meals: Breakfast

What's included

- Airport transfers and all land transport in a private vehicle with a driver
- The Pokhara to Kathmandu flight on day 11, with travel by road if the flight cannot operate
- Eleven nights: three in Kathmandu, one at the Trishuli river camp, three in Pokhara and four in teahouses
- The Trishuli rafting day with a licensed river guide, safety kayaker and all equipment
- All meals from day 3 to day 9, and breakfast on all other days
- A licensed trekking guide for the five trail days, and a porter for every two trekkers
- ACAP permit and TIMS card for the trek
- A licensed cultural guide and all monument entry fees for the Kathmandu Valley days
- The boat on Phewa Tal, and the Jhinu hot springs fee

Not included

- International flights and the Nepal visa
- Lunch and dinner in Kathmandu and Pokhara
- Drinks, hot showers, wifi and battery charging in the teahouses
- Travel insurance, which should cover trekking to 4,000 m
- Sleeping bag, which can be hired in Kathmandu or Pokhara for about $2 a day
- Tips for the guide, porters and river crew
- Optional extras: paragliding, the Everest scenic flight and a Chitwan extension

Permits and other costs

Permit	Fee	Issued by
Annapurna Conservation Area permit (ACAP). Checked at Birethanti on the way in and again on the way out. Children under ten are free. Included in your price.	NPR 3,000, about $22	Kathmandu or Pokhara, before you start
TIMS card. The independent green card was withdrawn in 2023, so the card is issued to the agency rather than to you. Included in your price.	NPR 2,000, about $17	Through a registered agency, from the tourism board
Licensed guide, and a registered agency. Since April 2023, foreign nationals may not trek in Nepal without a licensed guide booked through a registered agency. This applies to the Ghorepani trail as it does everywhere else.	Inside the trip price	Nepal Tourism Board and the trekking association
Rafting permit. Arranged by the rafting company, so you do not need to deal with it. If you raft with another company, check that it holds one, as not all operators on the Trishuli do.	Inside the trip price	Department of Tourism, through the rafting operator

Nepal tourist visa. Fifteen days covers this trip with three days to spare. Pay in cash, in clean notes, at a bank counter. Indian nationals do not need a visa.	$30 for 15 days	On arrival at Kathmandu airport

Other cost	Amount	Note
Nepal visa on arrival, 15 days	$30	Cash at the airport bank counter
ACAP permit	$22	NPR 3,000. Checked at Birethanti on the way in
TIMS card	$17	NPR 2,000, issued through a registered agency. Included in your price
Kathmandu hotel	$35–70 a night	Three-star, three nights
Pokhara hotel by the lake	$35–75 a night	Three nights. The lakeside rooms are worth the extra cost
Trishuli rafting and river camp	$95–130	Two days, including the guide, equipment, camp and all meals
Teahouse accommodation on the trail	$6–12 a night	Four nights. Rooms are inexpensive because you eat where you stay
Food on the trail	$25–35 a day	Three meals and tea. Dal bhat is the best value on any menu in Nepal
Licensed trekking guide	$30–40 a day	Including their accommodation and meals. Legally required since April 2023
Porter, one for every two trekkers	$22–28 a day	Including their accommodation and meals
Pokhara to Kathmandu flight	$110–140	Twenty-five minutes, with the mountains visible from the left-hand windows
Travel insurance to 4,000 m	$60–110	Should cover trekking and, ideally, helicopter rescue
Tips for the guide, porters and river crew	$90–140	Per traveller, given at the end of each section

Packing list

Packing for rafting and trekking

You need to pack for two different activities in one bag. For the Trishuli you need quick-drying clothes, a dry bag and clothes you do not mind getting wet; for Ghorepani in January you need a down jacket and a sleeping bag. Anything you do not need on the trail can be left at the Pokhara hotel, so bring both and divide your luggage there.

Headwear and eyewear

- A warm hat for the morning on Poon Hill, the coldest hour of the trip
- A sun hat with a brim, for the river and the lower trail
- Sunglasses, with a strap for rafting
- A head torch, for the 4.30 am start on day 7

Clothing

- A down or synthetic jacket for Ghorepani and Poon Hill
- A waterproof jacket and trousers
- Two base layers and a fleece
- Trekking trousers, plus shorts and a quick-drying top for the river
- Swimwear, for rafting and the Jhinu hot springs

Footwear and hands

- Boots broken in over at least 60 km, with ankle support for the stone steps
- Four pairs of trekking socks
- Thin gloves for the morning on Poon Hill
- Two trekking poles, which protect your knees on the descent
- Sandals or trainers for the camp, teahouse evenings and the hot springs

Sleeping

- A sleeping bag rated to minus 5 Celsius, which you can hire in Kathmandu or Pokhara if you prefer not to bring one
- A silk liner, which is useful with the teahouse blankets
- Earplugs, as teahouse walls are made of plywood
- A power bank, because charging on the trail costs money and there is no power at the river camp

Health

- Blister kit, used before a blister forms
- Sun cream, factor 30 or above, and lip balm
- Rehydration salts and your usual remedy for stomach upsets
- Insect repellent for the river camp
- Your own prescription medicines in their original packaging

Bags

- One duffel of up to 15 kg for the porter
- A 25 to 30 litre daypack with a rain cover
- A dry bag for items that must stay dry on the raft, including your phone
- A refillable water bottle, with a total capacity of two litres between bottle and bladder

Documents

- Passport valid for six months, and four passport photographs for the permits
- Travel insurance with trekking cover to 4,000 m, with the policy number on paper
- US dollars in clean notes for the visa counter
- Enough rupees, withdrawn in Pokhara, for the trail, where there are no cash machines

Altitude profile

Day	Place	Sleep at	Highest point
5	Tikhedhunga	1,540 m	1,540 m
6	Ghorepani	2,850 m	2,850 m
7	Tadapani	2,630 m	3,210 m
8	Jhinu Danda	1,780 m	2,630 m
9	Pokhara	820 m	1,780 m

Getting there and back

The flights and long drives on this itinerary, and what happens if one is delayed or cancelled.

Getting to Kathmandu

Fly to Tribhuvan International Airport via Delhi, Doha, Dubai, Istanbul, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur or Singapore. There are no direct flights from Europe or North America. There are no activities on day 1, so a late arrival is fine.

Visa on arrival

Complete the form at the kiosk, pay $30 in cash for a 15-day visa at the bank counter, then go through immigration. Bring clean dollar notes. Indian nationals do not need a visa. Allow forty minutes to two hours.

The Pokhara flight on day 11

A twenty-five-minute flight with the mountains visible from the left-hand windows, so ask for a left-hand seat at check-in. The aircraft is small and the checked baggage allowance is 15 kg. If cloud prevents the flight, we drive instead, which takes most of the day and means missing the afternoon in Bhaktapur.

Departure

Day 12 has a free morning and a transfer to the airport three hours before your flight. If you are flying home overnight and want to use the day, we can arrange a day room so you do not have to wait in the terminal.

Accommodation

Comfortable hotel rooms at the start and end, a tent on a river beach in between, and simple twin rooms in teahouses with a wood stove in the dining room on the trail.

Where	Nights	Type	Room	Bathroom
Kathmandu	3	Three-star hotel, in or near Thamel	Twin or double	Private, hot water
Trishuli river camp	1	Two-person tent on a sandy beach	Twin	Toilet tent, and the river for washing
Pokhara	3	Hotel by Phewa Tal	Twin or double, lake-facing where possible	Private, hot water
On the trail	4	Teahouse	Twin, with blankets	Private at Tikhedhunga and Jhinu, shared at Ghorepani and Tadapani

Hot shower
Available every night except at the river camp. On the trail, showers are solar or gas-heated and cost $2 to $4. At Ghorepani in January, we recommend paying for one and showering before dark.

Hot springs
Three stone pools beside the Modi Khola at Jhinu, twenty minutes below the village. Entry costs NPR 150.

Charging
Mains power in the cities and at most teahouses, where charging costs $2 to $3 per device. No power at the river camp. Bring a power bank.

Wifi
Available in the cities and at every teahouse on this trail, where it costs a couple of dollars and is often unreliable.

Heating
A wood or dung stove in the teahouse dining room, lit at about five, and no heating in the bedrooms. Ghorepani is the coldest stop.

Drinking water
Boiled water is sold by the litre at every teahouse, which is cheaper and better than bottled water. Bring containers holding two litres and a backup purification method.

Luggage
A porter carries one duffel of up to 15 kg for every two trekkers. Anything you do not need on the trail stays at the Pokhara hotel.

Cash
Cash machines in Kathmandu and Pokhara, but none on the trail. Withdraw enough in Pokhara for showers, wifi, drinks and tips.

Meals

Meal	Time	What it is like
Breakfast	7:00–8:00	Porridge, eggs, Tibetan bread and tea on the trail. On the Poon Hill morning, tea is served first and breakfast afterwards
Lunch	12:00–13:30	At a teahouse on the way. It takes about forty minutes to prepare. Dal bhat, noodles or fried rice
Dinner	18:30	Ordered at four so the kitchen can cook for everyone at once. Dal bhat is the only dish on the menu served with free refills
Tea	16:00	Milk tea or hot ginger, lemon and honey when you reach the teahouse, by the newly lit stove

Diet	How we manage it
Vegetarian	Easy everywhere. Most teahouse food is vegetarian, and dal bhat is one of the best dishes on the menu.
Vegan	Manageable. Dal bhat without ghee, vegetable curry and noodles are available. Tell the guide on day 1, and they will explain your requirements in Nepali at each teahouse, which works better than explaining them in English.
Gluten free	Rice, dal, potatoes and eggs are safe. Bread, noodles and momo are not. It is possible on this trail, but the choice is limited.
Nut allergy	Tell us when you book. Teahouse kitchens are small and there is a real risk of cross-contamination, so the guide will speak to each kitchen, and we prefer to communicate your needs more than necessary.
Halal	Straightforward in Kathmandu and Pokhara. On the trail, we recommend eating vegetarian food.

A typical day

Time	What happens
6:30	Tea, and pack your bag before breakfast
7:30	Breakfast in the dining room, usually the warmest place in the morning
8:00	Walking, at a pace set by the slowest walker
12:00	Lunch at a teahouse, which takes about forty minutes to prepare
13:30	Afternoon walk, the shorter part of the day
15:30	Arrive at the teahouse, have tea, and shower before the sun leaves the valley
16:00	Order dinner, as the kitchen needs to know early
18:30	Dinner, and a briefing on the next day with the map
20:30	Bed. The stove goes out and the dining room empties

Difficulty and preparation

Day 6 climbs 1,300 m and begins with 3,300 stone steps. No other day on this trip is as demanding.

Difficulty 2 of 5

Easy to moderate, with one demanding morning. Four of the five trail days are four to six hours on a good path, with a bed and a hot meal at the end. Day 6 climbs 1,300 m, starting with 3,300 stone steps, and it is the most memorable day of the trek.

- Five trekking days of four to seven hours each
- One climb of 1,300 m on day 6, on stone steps for the first two hours
- A highest point of 3,210 m, reached by a forty-five-minute walk before dawn
- A day on grade two and three water, which requires no experience
- A porter for every two trekkers, so you carry only a daypack

Getting ready

12 weeks before: Build up to six hours

Walk two or three times a week, with one long walk at the weekend. Build up to five or six hours on hills carrying a 6 kg daypack. This is enough for four of the five trail days.

8 weeks before: Train on stairs

Day 6 has 3,300 stone steps followed by a long climb. The best preparation is walking up steps. Twice a week, climb a staircase or a steep hill repeatedly, and day 6 will be tiring rather than exhausting.

4 weeks before: Break in your boots

Walk at least sixty kilometres in the boots you are bringing. Much of the Ghorepani trail is stone steps, and new boots can cause blisters on your heels by day 6.

Altitude and safety

Altitude is not a significant factor on this trip. The highest you sleep is 2,850 m, and you spend about an hour at 3,210 m at sunrise, which is below the altitude at which most people notice any effects. Breathlessness on the Ulleri steps is due to fitness rather than altitude, and it passes once you reach the top.

What to watch for

- A headache that does not improve after drinking water and eating
- Nausea or loss of appetite at Ghorepani
- Poor sleep on the first night above 2,500 m, which is common and usually harmless

How to prevent it

- A gentle first day to 1,540 m, so that you gain height gradually
- Three litres of fluid a day, which the guide will remind you about
- Walking the Ulleri steps slowly, as there is no need to hurry and the day is long

What we do

1. Report symptoms
Tell the guide if you have a headache at Ghorepani. It is almost always caused by dehydration and is easy to treat.

2. Descend
The walk from Ghorepani to Tikhedhunga takes a morning and descends 1,300 m. Descent is always straightforward on this trail, which is one reason it suits people new to Nepal.

Weather by month

The trail figures are for Ghorepani at 2,850 m, the coldest night of the trip. The Kathmandu Valley and the river are both considerably warmer.

Month	Day at Ghorepani	Night at Ghorepani	Dawn on Poon Hill	Conditions	Note
January	9°C	-4°C	-6°C	Good	The clearest views of the year from Poon Hill and the coldest nights at Ghorepani. Snow on the ridge is possible. The river is cold.
February	11°C	-2°C	-4°C	Good	Warmer, still clear and quiet on the trail. A good month if you do not mind a cold night.
March	15°C	2°C	0°C	Best	Rhododendrons begin to flower on the Ghorepani ridge, one of the finest forests in Nepal at this time. Warm on the river.
April	18°C	5°C	3°C	Best	Rhododendrons at their peak and warm walking conditions. Hazier than autumn, so the view from Poon Hill is a little less clear. The busiest spring month.
May	20°C	8°C	6°C	Good	Hot on the lower trail and hazy higher up, with afternoon storms. Good for rafting, less good for views.
June	20°C	10°C	8°C	Hard	The monsoon arrives, leeches appear in the forest and the mountains are hidden by cloud. The Trishuli runs high and rafting becomes more difficult.
July	19°C	11°C	9°C	Hard	The wettest month. The river is in flood and we do not run rafting trips.
August	19°C	11°C	9°C	Hard	Similar to the previous month. Green, cheaper and quiet, but there is no view from Poon Hill.

September	18°C	8°C	6°C	Good	The monsoon clears during the month, and the last ten days often have the clearest air of the year.
October	16°C	4°C	2°C	Best	The best month and the busiest. Clear air, warm days, crowds at Poon Hill at dawn and the river at an ideal level.
November	13°C	0°C	-2°C	Best	Our preferred month. Clear, cool, quieter than October, and the most comfortable conditions on the trail.
December	10°C	-3°C	-5°C	Good	Very clear and very cold at Ghorepani. Short days, quiet teahouses and full winter conditions.

Figures for 2,850 m, which is the cold night of the trip, with the Poon Hill dawn alongside. Kathmandu, Pokhara and the river all run ten to fifteen degrees warmer.

Guides and porters

Your guide

A licensed trekking guide accompanies you for the five trail days, with a porter for every two trekkers. A second guide joins for groups of ten or more. On the Kathmandu Valley days you have a licensed cultural guide, who is a different person with different expertise, and a driver throughout.

River crew

A licensed river guide steers each raft, a safety kayaker accompanies you on the water, and a kitchen crew goes ahead to the beach and has the fire lit before you arrive. Everyone is given a helmet and a buoyancy aid, and there is a safety briefing before you get in, which you should listen to carefully.

Porters and luggage

Each porter carries fifteen kilos of luggage for two trekkers, a fair and manageable load. We supply boots and a jacket rather than expecting porters to buy them from their wages. All staff are insured. If you would like to know what they are paid, ask and we will tell you.

Responsible travel

Drinking water

Every teahouse on this trail sells boiled water by the litre for less than the price of a bottle, and ACAP has been working for years to end the use of plastic bottles here. Over five days, this saves about fifteen bottles that would otherwise be carried up the hill and left there.

Eat where you stay

Teahouse rooms are very cheap because the families who run them earn their income from meals. Taking a room and then eating dinner elsewhere costs them money, so we do not do it.

Choosing a rafting company

Some Trishuli operators hold a permit, provide a safety kayaker and insure their guides, and some do not. We use operators who do, and this accounts for most of the cost of the rafting day.

Waste

Everything taken onto the beach is taken away in the rafts, including the remains of the fire. A different group uses the Trishuli beaches most nights of the season, and they remain usable only because most companies do this.

Booking and payment

How to book

Email us or send a WhatsApp message with your arrival date and the number of people in your group. We reply within a day with a confirmed itinerary and a price.

Deposit

A twenty per cent deposit secures the hotels, rafting and flight. The balance is due two weeks before you arrive or on arrival in Kathmandu.

Cancellation

If you cancel more than thirty days before departure, the deposit can be transferred to another date within a year. Within thirty days, the flight and river booking have been paid and we retain the deposit. Within seven days, half the total price is charged.

Changing the balance of activities

Some travellers want more time on the river and less on the trail, or the reverse. Both are easy to arrange, and we are happy to plan the trip you want rather than the one on this page. Tell us when you book and the price will be adjusted.

Insurance

You need cover for trekking to 4,000 m and, if possible, helicopter evacuation. This route is neither high nor remote, but a helicopter from Ghorepani is still expensive if you have to pay for it yourself.

Optional extras

Chitwan National Park, two nights

$290, 2 extra days

This extension fits well, because the Trishuli finishing point is already on the road south. It includes a jungle lodge, a dugout canoe trip at first light, a guided walk and a jeep drive into the grassland where the rhinos live.

Paragliding from Sarangkot

$90, 1 morning

A twenty to thirty-minute tandem flight, launching from the ridge above Pokhara and landing by the lake. It is added to the morning of day 10 and refunded if the flight cannot go ahead.

Everest scenic flight

$220, 1 morning

A one-hour flight along the range from Kathmandu with a guaranteed window seat, returning before eight. It fits on day 2 or day 12 without changing anything else.

Extension to Annapurna Base Camp

$340, adds 3 days

Instead of descending the gorge at Chhomrong, you continue up it. The extension adds three days, including a night in the sanctuary at 4,130 m, with much bigger mountain scenery. It makes the trip considerably harder.

A second night at the river camp

$110, 1 extra day

A full second day on the water down to Mugling instead of finishing at Kurintar, with more rapids and another night on a beach. Many travellers say they would have liked this part of the trip to be longer.

Four-star hotel upgrade

from $260, same length

Better rooms in Kathmandu and a lakeside resort in Pokhara. The teahouses and the river camp cannot be upgraded.

Frequently asked questions

Answers to the 12 questions travellers ask us most often. If your question is not here, contact us and we will answer it.

How hard is the trekking section?

Moderate rather than easy, with one demanding day. Day 6 climbs 1,300 m, and the first two hours are 3,300 stone steps up to Ulleri. The other days are four to six hours on a good path, ending at a teahouse. If you regularly walk for a few hours at weekends, you will manage well.

Do I need any rafting experience?

No. In autumn and spring the Trishuli is grade two and three, which means lively water with no real technical difficulty, and a licensed guide steers every raft. There is a safety briefing before you get in, a safety kayaker on the water, and you wear a helmet and a buoyancy aid.

Do I need to be able to swim?

It helps, but it is not required. You wear a buoyancy aid that keeps you afloat whether or not you can swim. If you are nervous of water, please tell us before you book.

Will I get altitude sickness?

It is very unlikely. The highest you sleep is 2,850 m, and you spend about an hour at 3,210 m, which is below the altitude at which most people notice any effects. Some people feel breathless on the Ulleri steps, but this is due to fitness rather than altitude.

What are the teahouses like?

Simple and clean. A twin room with two beds and blankets, a shared bathroom in the older teahouses and a private one in most of the newer ones, and a dining room with a stove that is lit at five. Ghorepani is the coldest night, and the beds there have thick blankets.

Do I need a sleeping bag?

Yes, for Ghorepani and Tadapani. The teahouses provide blankets, but they are not warm enough in December and January. A bag rated to minus five is sufficient, and you can hire one in Kathmandu or Pokhara for about $2 a day rather than bringing your own.

What is the river camp like?

Two-person tents on a sandy beach, a kitchen that the crew carry in the rafts, and a campfire under the stars. There is a toilet tent. There is no shower, but after an afternoon on the river this matters less than you might expect.

Can I skip the rafting?

Yes. We drive you to Pokhara instead and you have a day by the lake. Tell us when you book and the price is reduced. Rafting is the part of the trip people are most often nervous about, and the part they least often regret.

How much will I need to carry?

A daypack of about six kilos, with water, a warm layer, a waterproof and your camera. A porter carries up to fifteen kilos of luggage in a duffel for every two trekkers. On the rafting day, everything is stored in a waterproof barrel in the raft.

What is the best month?

October and November have the clearest air and the warmest conditions on the trail. March and April bring rhododendrons in flower on the Ghorepani ridge, one of the finest forests in Nepal at that time. December and January are clear but very cold at Ghorepani, and the river is cold. May becomes hazy.

Is it a group departure?

It is a private trip on your own dates, unless you ask to join a set departure. Most bookings are for two travellers, and the price per person falls as numbers increase, because the vehicle, guide and raft cost the same regardless.

Can I add Chitwan?

Yes, and it fits well because the Trishuli finishing point is on the road south. It adds two days and a night at a jungle lodge, either between day 4 and Pokhara or at the end of the trip. Tell us when you book and we will plan it as one itinerary.

Photos, videos and reviews of this trip: earthbound.rajansimkhada.com/nepal-soft-adventure-tour