

Tour Itinerary

This tour takes us into the heart of Nepal from the sights of Kathmandu down onto the plains of the Terai to view its wildlife then up over the mountains to Pokhara on the shores of Phewa Tal, Nepal's second largest lake. We take in the colours and the people of this majestic land under the backdrop of the mighty Himalayan Range with its snow covered peaks. From Pokhara it's an overnight stay in a lovely quiet hilltop town before arriving once again in Kathmandu having experienced this wonderful country first hand.

- Theme – Explorer/Cultural
- Physical – Medium Level
- Style – Comfort

Arrival

On arrival at the airport you will be met outside the terminal building and we will head straight to Boudha to our hotel. The afternoon/evening is free depending on your time of arrival. The Shenchen Hotel is situated very close to the giant stupa of Boudhanath after freshening up and taking some time to relax after the flight we can take a stroll down to this amazing stupa. Joining the pilgrims circling the stupa in the early evening gives us a chance to soak up the atmosphere and stretch your legs after your flight. We can have our evening meal in any one of the many excellent restaurants in this area before retiring to the hotel.

Day 1

After breakfast we head over to Thamel famed for its many shops, hotels and restaurants and the hub of visitors arriving in Kathmandu. We pick up our bicycles here for a morning's cycle ride through the narrow streets to another world heritage site, Swayambunath. This is a spectacular temple built on a hill overlooking the whole of the Kathmandu valley. If weather conditions are good you may get your first sight of the Himalayan Range from here. We then take an easy ride towards Kathmandu's Durbar Square through narrow streets in the old part of the city stopping at various points of interest along the way. Durbar means "palace" and it's here that the kings of Nepal would reside. Its fantastic array of architecture is a must to see and it's easy to spend hours here taking in the scenes of people, temples and palaces. A short cycle ride back to Thamel will see us arriving in time for lunch at one of the many kinds of restaurants.

After lunch we leave the bikes behind and head over to Pashupatinath, Nepal's most important Hindu Temple. It's at this point that the Holy Bagmati river briefly flows north again towards the Himalaya, because of that many Hindus see this as a most auspicious place and Pashupatinath has grown along its banks. We then take a short walk back to Boudhanath and the rest of the afternoon and evening is free.

Day 2

After breakfast we head to Patan's Durbar Square. At one time Kathmandu was divided into three Kingdoms Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur. Rival kings competed against each other to build the finest palaces which we still see today. Patan is a fine example of this, combined with ancient craft shops where craftsmen carry on with their profession as they have done for hundreds of years. Buildings here date back to the 12th century and earlier.

Bhaktapur is considered to be the best preserved of all the medieval cities. It's a place to slow down and wander through the narrow cobbled streets taking in the sights and sounds of people going about their daily lives. This city is famed for its pottery and you still see today old potters wheels in use, you can almost imagine yourself being back in those days gone by.

We head back to our base at Boudhanath in the afternoon where you are free to take in the shops in the area or relax in the many cafes overlooking the huge stupa. The evening is free for you to explore.

Day 3

We have an early start this morning as we head over towards the centre of Kathmandu to catch the morning bus to Chitwan in the south of Nepal. The journey takes around 6 hours firstly climbing out of the Kathmandu Valley before descending down to the plains of the Terai region. You can have some glimpses of the Himalayan Range if weather conditions are good as we follow the rivers' course down through towns and villages along the way.

We arrive at our hotel in Sauraha early afternoon where we can rest up and relax in the warmer weather of this region. In the afternoon we can take a walk along the banks of the Rapti River which separates us from the world famous Chitwan National Park. It's a lovely walk through woods and open grassland where it's possible to see rhino, wild elephant, deer in fact many varieties of animals and birds and watch the sun set over the park. In the evening we will attend a cultural dance evening given by the local Tharu people after which we can have dinner and retire to the hotel.