

Nepal

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Travel time: March till April 98.

It's very easy to travel here but also touristy. The western part is not crowded but also very nice.

Mahendra Nagar

If you cross the border here you need a horsecar to reach the border itself. Notice how much the locals are paying. Between the two borders it's about one kilometer which is a pleasure to walk if you have light luggages. From the Nepal side you have to take again a horsecar to Mahendra Nagar. Don't pay the dollar charge you were asked by the customs officer. If you have a valid visa there is no need to pay any charge nowhere.

You can get a single room for 70Rs. Beer is expensive (130Rs). Nothing special to discover here but silent and friendly. Walk through the fields nearby and discover the land and it's people on your own.

To Ambassa (Bardia-Nationalpark) take the bus for 116Rs (9am, 6-8 hours). Be prepared for a lousy field path and 22 river crossings. The construction of the new road from Mahendra Nagar to the main bridge across Karnali River near Chisapani will be finished in 2002 (maybe).

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Bardia NP

Leave the bus at Ambassa and take a pickup to Tackadoro. From there it's 20 min. walk to the Paradise-Resort (200Rs for a hut with own shower, toilet and mouse). Food is good and expensive here. Another choice is to walk back to Tackadoro which is not easy by night. In high season are more accommodation available.

The entrance fee for the national park [NP] is 650Rs. You can enter the NP without guide but you won't see any big animals and you can loose your way easily. A guide cost per person 500Rs! No discount also with larger groups.

If you want to see the big wild animals for less money go to the Chitwan National Park. It's more crowded but the guides are cheaper (350Rs p.p.) and they are much more professional.

To Kathmandu take a bus form Ambassa to Kohalpur (3-4h, 57Rs). Be in Kohalpur before 4pm to get a ticket for the nightbus to Kathmandu (12h).

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Kathmandu

In the offseason you can get a single room for 100Rs in the center (King's Land at Greater Thamel, friendly staff, solar shower).

It's not easy to find a local kitchen in Kathmandu but it's possible! One is at the table-tennis club near the Hotel Earth House (Greater Thamel). Good food with tea for 25Rs.

For a trekking permit calculate a whole day at the immigration office. It's very chaotic. Don't trust the guides at the office they promise you to get the permit as quick as possible. You have to fill out a form, pay the fee and leave your passport at the office. Therefore you get a receipt. Come back after lunch and you will hopefully get back your passport and the trekking permit. It happened that same got lost.

You should also register your trek at your embassy in Kathmandu for free to have a quick payment for rescue service if something will happen!!!

The touristbus to Pokhara or Dumre cost about 200Rs and the more interesting local bus less than the half.

To Varanasi you can get a touristbus for 520Rs at a travel agency. It's cheaper but not so comfortable to take the local bus to Brigangi for 150Rs. From here it's 1h and a few Rs to the border at Roxal. From Roxal is a bus going to Patna for 130 Indian Rs. Change to the train to Mugalsrah for 55 Indian Rs. It's only 14km from Mugalsrah to Varanasi. A scooter cost about 50 Indian Rs to the center if you bargain well.

For Myanmar you can get a visa at the embassy in Patan (3km from Kathmandu) in less than two hours for 10 USD cash. Note that it's impossible to cross the border to Myanmar from India or Bangladesh overland.

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Bhaktapur

Very impressive city (300Rs admission) near Kathmandu (10 km). You can hire a mountainbike in Kathmandu for 120Rs a day and enter Bhaktapur on a sideroad without any admission.

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Trekking in the mountains

It's necessary to inform your embassy in Kathmandu for free where you want trek. The rescue service will be paid in advance if they have to be active. No cash, no help!!! The embassy will prepay the rescue if you have registered.

So remember the phone number which is written on the form you'll get from the embassy and please inform them that your are back when you have made the trek.

A good idea is to carry an ordinary aluminum bottle (1l) for drinking water with you. Fill it with hot water (available in the lodges) before you go to bed. Pack it in your sleeping bag down to your feet. It will warm your feet at night and at the next morning it has the right temperature for a drink.

Walking sticks are also very comfortable.

And be equipped for -20 °C if you walk above 4000Hm. Don't trust the instructions of the producers. Experience the worst case before!!!

If you have no experience in walking in the mountains (particularly to the altitude you want to reach) it's better to take a guide with you. I do mountaineering since 10 years in the Alps. I think I have a lot of knowledge but also with this experience there is a high risk on every trek I do. A good guide can save your live!!!

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Annapurna-Circle

You can take the lousy tourist bus from Kathmandu to Dumre for 175Rs or the more interesting local bus for 85Rs. From Dumre you can get a bus for 100Rs to Besi Sahar (only 43km but 4h) and the street is so bad that you can realize the price. Sometimes they'll charge for a backpack 50Rs extra. Bargain!

Besi Sahar:

You can get a single room for 20Rs but they expect that you eat their overpriced dish. It's cheaper if you eat in a local kitchen available in the village for 30Rs for a great meal .

Jagat:

From Besi Sahar to Jagat it's 10h if you walk quickly and want to have heavy feet at the next day. You can find accommodation in Jagat for 10Rs and Dal Bhat for 70Rs. Beer is 110Rs.

Tal:

Very nice place to relax.

Latte Marang:

Nice views to both sides of the valley and a hot spring.

Chame:

Stay at the nice New Tibet Hotel at the northern end of the village across the river. Good food and friendly staff. A hot spring but

not as good as in Latte Marang.

Manang:

You can get a double room for 120Rs or a dorm for 30Rs. Some guest houses have solar shower which is very comfortable if the sun is shining. Please prefer them.

You should make one or better two restday here to acclimatize.

There is a lecture about altitude sickness at 3pm at the aid post every day. The doctor's business is to sell medicine against altitude sickness. It's bad to take them as a prevention. You'll risk your life if you do so!!!

Yak Kharka:

You can find a dorm for 50Rs.

Thorung Phedi:

It's cold and expensive here. Tea 30Rs, Dal Bhat 180Rs.

To Muktinath start early morning at least 4am and in a group. There is a small stone hut half way and on the top. Don't use them as a sleeping place. It's too high and cold there.

Muktinath:

All is available here but expensive.

From Muktinath to Kagbeni you can walk through Mustang area where you normally need an extra permit. Be very well prepared with food, water, a compass and the "official" map which is wrong: "Round Annapurna, scale 1:150000, Visit Nepal 98", available in Kathmandu. There are two ways in the map. One is official (lined) and one is illegal without permit (dotted way). Walk the dotted path on the map about Chhengar, Purang, Puta to Kagbeni. Be very caution because it's not easy to find the way. In this map there is no clear path but it's very impressive. You walk through Mustang area! No problem at the checkpoint at Kagbeni. Tell them you've lost your way because of the wrong map.

Jomson:

Nice accommodation at the Dhaulagiri Hotel (single 50Rs) with solar shower and good food. Fresh bread at the German Bakery.

From here to Pokhara the villages are much more developed then on the reverse way from Muktinath to Besi Sahar. It's much more touristy here.

Form here to Kalopani is a long way (min. 8h). If the water is low you can make a lot of shortcuts through the river bed. After Larjung you should cross the river over a suspension bridge. Don't walk to Sokung like the "wrong" map will show you. It's a dead end.

Kalopani:

From here to Tatopani is a hard walk because it's an up and down all the way.

Tatopani:

Stay at the Trekker Lodge with a nice garden, good food (try the yak-cheese) and a hot spring nearby.

To the Poon Hill there is a junction short behind a bridge (1/2h from Tatopani). Walk left up the hill. Very nice landscape and not crowded but long.

Doerali:

Stay at the Super View Lodge. They have a heated lounge with an exaggerated friendly staff, warm shower outside and a viewpoint on the rooftop. The way to the Poon Hill is very slippery in the morning. The sunrise at the summit is very impressive. Take warm clothes and tea with you.

To Lumle you have to walk down thousands of stairs. It's knee hurting if you have no walking sticks. From Lumle to Pokhara you

can take a taxi for 600Rs or the local bus for 30Rs. From the bus terminal to the center there is definitely a bus to the center or a taxi for 50Rs.

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Pokhara

Very touristy here and all is available. The only difficulty is to find a local kitchen with cheap food but there are some. Search for them near the camping ground at lakeside north (Khaharey). Stay at the silent Paramount Hotel lakeside east (Ammat) with a nice garden but lousy food (single 100Rs in the offseason with own hot shower).

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