



Destination

NEPAL


Important information to help you prepare for your upcoming Exodus trip.

We have put this guide together to provide you with as many of the tips and insights we've picked up over the years of running tours in this region. The information has been gathered from our local partners, Exodus staff as well as past Exodus travellers, and we hope will assist you when making your final preparations over the coming weeks.

Please read it in conjunction with your Joining Instructions and the Trip Notes for your holiday, to ensure you are fully prepared.



FACT BOX:

Currency	Nepalese Rupee (NPR)
Language	Nepali
Capital City	Kathmandu
Population	26,500 000*
Dialling code	+977
Time zone	GMT/UTC +05:45hr
National Flag	



Namaste!

I hope you are looking forward to your trip to Nepal.

Nepal is a country that has long held a grip on western imaginations, and it's no different today. From colourful, bustling Kathmandu to the imposing Himalaya, the breadth and range of experiences and sights will fascinate and hopefully stay with you long after you return home.

You will meet Sherpas, Tamangs and many other ethnic groups, and we firmly believe you won't return home with just memories of the majestic mountains, but also the friendliness of the people.

I hope you're looking forward to what's going to be a fantastic trip!

Best wishes,
Valerie Parkinson
Exodus Nepal Base Manager



Facts correct as of February 2020

**Staff Tip:**

"We recommend getting your visa in advance if possible as it can be slow-going to get one on arrival at Kathmandu airport because there are three separate queues which you must wait in: one to complete the visa application form, another to make the payment, and finally the immigration desk itself. If however, you do plan to get one on arrival we highly recommend completing the online tourist visa form (<http://online.nepalimmigration.gov.np/tourist-visa>) not more than 15 days prior to your arrival into Nepal - this means you can skip the first queue and go straight to the payment desk!"

**Staff Tip:**

"If you are meeting the leader at the airport, they will be waiting just outside the airport building and will be wearing an Exodus t-shirt and holding a sign. Please ONLY follow someone with Exodus clothing, as it can sometimes be confusing with all the people being picked up. It takes approximately 30 minutes to drive from the airport to the city centre hotels, although Kathmandu traffic can prolong this."



ACCOMMODATION & FACILITIES

**KATHMANDU ACCOMMODATION**

For most of our trekking trips, we use the Royal Singi Hotel, which is centrally located in Kathmandu, just off Durbar Marg and 15 minutes' walk from the popular Thamel area. Facilities include a restaurant, bar, outdoor courtyard, shops, a small coffee shop and currency exchange. There is an Exodus desk in the lobby of the Royal Singi Hotel, which is manned mornings and evenings (from approx. 8-10am and 5:30-7:30pm) by our local representatives.

Our Annapurna Sanctuary Trek and our Premium and Exodus Edits trips use alternative Kathmandu hotels. These are all located in or within walking distance of Thamel: please refer to the Trip Notes for details.

Upon arrival please check the noticeboard (or ask at reception if there is no noticeboard) for a note from your leader. There will be a welcome briefing on the group arrival day - please bring your insurance details with you (and any passport photos for your trekking permit - if required - please check the packing section of the Trip Notes for your tour).

**TEA-HOUSE ACCOMMODATION**

Most of our Nepal trekking holidays use basic mountain lodges, also known as tea-houses. On most trekking routes, twin rooms are available throughout but exceptions to this are listed below. All beds have foam mattresses of varying thickness and pillows are supplied but you will need to bring a sleeping bag, or hire one through Exodus. Bedrooms are unheated and drafty and there are normally only a couple of shared bathrooms for the lodge.

- On the Annapurna Sanctuary Trek (code TNS) from Chomro to Annapurna Base Camp, lodges have multi-bedded rooms so you will need to share (due to the number of lodges being restricted by park rules).
- Our Premium and Exodus Edits holidays, Annapurna & Chitwan in Luxury (code TNX) and Mountain Vistas & River Quests in Nepal (code ENX) use comfortable Ker & Downey lodges instead of tea-houses. Rooms are twin-bedded with en suite bathrooms complete with hot water and Western style toilets. Duvets and towels are provided so you do not need a sleeping bag.
- On the Manaslu Lodge Circuit (code TNA) the lodges are also more basic and are relatively small so you may have to share a triple room on the occasional night.
- A few of the lodges in Langtang are quite basic, as they are owned by the National Park (at Gosainkund and Gopte) and are not of the same standard as privately owned lodges.
- Occasionally, due to availability issues, you may be given a room with a bathroom. Some lodges lock the bathrooms unless they are paid for, in which case you must use the common bathrooms as usual. If you wish to use the attached bathroom then you will need to pay extra to the lodge owner directly, but your leader will advise you on this.
- We do not offer single rooms in the tea-houses. However, if they are quiet and have spare rooms, you may be able to pay something directly to the owner for a single room. Please speak to your leader locally about this.

**SHOWERS**

Most lodges now offer "hot showers". In the Annapurna Region, showers are often free but in the Everest, Langtang and Manaslu Regions the cost of a hot shower is approximately NPR250-500. Sometimes a hot shower simply means a bucket of hot water (not an actual shower head!) and you can speak to your leader if you would like to arrange one. For ecological reasons, please try and limit your use of hot water if the water is not solar heated.

Some of the lodges have gas heated showers (from a gas bottle, known as 'gas geysers').



Please take great care when using gas showers to ensure there is ventilation (an open window, gap under a door) in the bathroom, as in a closed space there is a risk of carbon monoxide build-up which can be lethal.

Please note that in the Everest, Annapurna and Langtang Regions there is very little water at the higher altitudes and it is often frozen in winter. We do not recommend taking showers at the higher altitudes (above 4,000m) for health reasons (i.e. the difficulty to get dry and stay warm) and the fact that the showers can be very basic. All the lodges will offer a bowl of warm water for washing instead and you can use this to wash in your bedroom.

**Staff Tip:**

"If you do not have the Exodus insurance, your leader will need to check your own policy covers you to the highest point the trek goes to and for helicopter evacuation, so please make sure you check this before you leave home. Carry the full policy with you, as your leader will need to check it at the welcome briefing. "

**Staff Tip:**

"As you are passing through or staying in Nepali villages we would ask you to dress conservatively. Whilst it is acceptable for men to wear shorts it is not recommended that women walk in short shorts; longer shorts, skirts or trousers are better suited as are t-shirts that cover the shoulders."

It is essential to carry anti-bacterial hand washing gel with you to be used before and after meals, bathroom visits and handling dirty money.

TOILETS

Toilets are usually Asian 'squat' style, although many lodges have now installed 'western style' seated ones. Standards of cleanliness can vary, especially in the main trekking season when the lodges are very busy, and in winter when water freezes at night. They tend to be cleaner in the Annapurna Region where there is more water and washing is easier. Some lodges have an inside toilet for night time use only, and you should always take care as often any water on the floor will freeze and can be slippery.

There should be a water container in the toilet to flush with. If the water has run out, either refill it or ask the lodge owner or your leader to do so. Toilet paper is not provided and you need to bring your own or buy it locally (most tea-houses will sell some). Please do not put paper in the toilet bowl as it will block the system, and there is a bucket in every bathroom for used paper.



Staff Tip:

"Take plenty of (quality) tissues from home. Due to the dry and dusty conditions irritating your nasal passages you go through far more than you'd think. They can be quite easily bought along the way at every lodge but it's nearly GBP1 / USD1.30 per pocket pack of flimsy cheap tissues, so you really appreciate a Kleenex from home that doesn't disintegrate with the first blow."

RUBBISH

Exodus tries to operate a 'leave no trace policy' and we ask that you do not take any unnecessary packaging with you into the mountains as proper waste disposal and recycling facilities are non-existent and waste (including plastic) is often burned.

Be wary that in cold alpine climates it takes much longer for even biodegradable waste to decompose too.

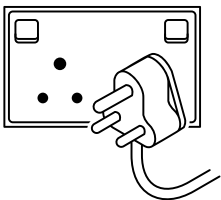
There are waste bins in the tea-houses if needed. Please also take any used batteries home with you.

WI-FI + PHONE RECEPTION

Mobile signal coverage is increasing, but remains variable to non-existent in some areas. Your leader will carry a mobile phone, and there are also public telephones and satellite phones available in many lodges and villages and it is usually possible to make international calls from these (though not always guaranteed). Wi-Fi availability varies between regions but even where it is available, a front of poor weather can mean it doesn't work.

- Annapurna Region: mobiles will work around Pokhara and at some points of the trek. Most tea-houses offer Wi-Fi; you have to pay for it in each lodge and the cost is around NPR100.
- Everest Region: there is mobile reception along most of the main trail to Everest Base Camp, although not everywhere and not away from the trail. Most lodges offer Wi-Fi. Below Kyanjuma you have to pay in each lodge (approx. NPR500 per day). Above Kyanjuma you can buy an Everest link data card for approx. NPR2000 which should work in all lodges above here.
- Langtang Region: mobiles will work in very few places. There are local satellite phones in some lodges/villages. W-Fi is only available in a few lodges (mostly at the start) and cannot be relied on.
- Manaslu Region: there is little mobile reception and Wi-Fi is only available in a few of the lodges and cannot be relied on.

PLUG & ELECTRICITY



Small scale electricity schemes are now up and running in several mountain communities. All lodges have electricity but strength and reliability is variable, meaning the light may not be strong enough to read by and may not always work. Solar lights are often used in the lodges where there is no electricity. A torch is essential.

Most lodges now also offer recharging facilities for approximately NPR150-350 per hour. Three different plug socket types are used in Nepal (types C, D and M) so it is advisable to bring a universal plug adaptor with you.



We suggest keeping batteries inside your sleeping bag at night to keep them warm and prolong their life.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

A first aid kit, which includes some prescription medicines, is carried on all treks and your trek leader will have completed a first aid course. However, they are not a doctor and therefore cannot recommend drugs to you – they can only suggest. The first aid kit is carried by an assistant guide who will walk with the group so that it is available for you to use at all times. Medical oxygen is carried on all treks that sleep above 3000m for use in emergencies and all of our leaders are trained in its use. If you have any medical issues or concerns, please talk to your leader in Kathmandu.

The medical kit includes the drug Diamox (also known as acetazolamide and normally only available on prescription), which has been shown to aid acclimatisation in some individuals, and therefore may either be used in small doses prophylactically to reduce the risk of acute mountain sickness (AMS) or as treatment soon after the onset of symptoms. It has a number of side-effects however. Clients considering using Diamox should speak to their doctor about the drug, its side-effects and a prescription.

Bad stomachs, colds, and chest problems are common ailments on treks in



Staff Tip:

"Some Nepalese (older women in particular) do not like being photographed. Always ask before you photograph anyone."



Staff Tip:

"Some handy items to take are; a buff – you can pick these up cheaply in Thamel or Namche/Pokhara, and it functions as a scarf, dust protector or neck warmer; sun block – factor 50+, and snow grade sunglasses – don't underestimate the glare off the mountains."



Staff Tip:

"I would recommend taking a heatproof or metal water bottle when trekking. It can be filled with boiling water in the evening and used as a hot water bottle to warm up your sleeping bag, and will also then be your drinking water for the following day!"

these conditions and we recommend bringing a personal medical kit with you including: rehydration sachets, diarrhoea treatment, cold & flu medicine and some antibiotics.

There are basic medical posts/trekker's clinics at various points along the trekking routes which are useful for treating minor ailments and for diagnoses but for anything serious you will need to return to Kathmandu or Pokhara for treatment.

▲ ALTITUDE

The majority of trekking areas in Nepal involve trekking and sleeping at high altitude (over 3000m). Our itineraries are designed to allow for acclimatisation, including rest/acclimatisation days but even so, you are likely to feel the effects at some point, if only mildly.

At altitude the air is thin and dry and this means you lose moisture more rapidly through respiration, plus the strong sun and wind wicks away any sweat without you realising - you therefore need to drink at least 4-litres of non-alcoholic fluid per day to stay hydrated to combat this and aid your acclimatisation.

When at altitude, as well as your leader keeping a close eye on you, we ask all clients to complete an AMS self-assessment form each day - this is based on a simple scoring system to track any symptoms and monitor their progression. Your leader will explain how this works.

Other than that, we advise you to 'listen to your body' - walk at a slow and steady pace, stop to catch your breath and rest when you need to.

FAQs

Will I be left alone if I can't complete the trek?

No, you won't be left alone if you can't continue the trek with the group due to illness or injury*. We have a ratio of one staff member to every four clients on all Nepal treks so a member of staff (usually an assistant guide) will stay behind to look after you, liaise with the office and follow out the agreed course of action. *If you are not fit enough to continue with the trek or opt not to (but are in otherwise good health), you may be left unaccompanied in one of the tea-houses until the group return but our local team would keep in regular contact and ask the tea-house owner to assist you.

What happens if I get altitude sickness?

The plan will depend on whether your symptoms are mild or more serious, temporary or worsening, as well as where you are and how accessible this is. If your leader or a doctor advises you not to continue your ascent, however



Staff Tip:

"An easy way to get chatting to your guides and porters is to order a round of chang when you reach the tea-house. Chang is a type of a Nepalese beer brewed by one or two people in the village, usually made from rice. It's got a milky white appearance and is a bit of an acquired taste for westerners, but very popular with the locals and a good way to make friends quickly! If you're in the Annapurnas, you could also try and track down some Marpha Region apple brandy, a local speciality in some areas."

disappointing this may be, please listen to them as your health and safety is our top priority. Sometimes it is possible to rest for a day and then catch up with the group if you feel better, or to rest at a tea-house for a while until the group return but on other occasions it may be advisable for you to begin your descent to lower altitudes immediately or in more severe cases a helicopter evacuation may be necessary.

MONEY & COSTS

\$ SPENDING MONEY

The national currency in Nepal is the Nepalese Rupee. It is a closed currency meaning it is illegal to import or export Rupees so you won't be able to get local currency outside of Nepal. You can either bring your spending money in cash to exchange or use a combination of cash and card withdrawals from ATMs. Most major currencies (including Pounds Sterling, Dollars and Euros) can be exchanged in Nepal but notes must be in good condition - torn, tatty or marked notes will not be accepted. Scottish or Irish Currency cannot be changed in Nepal and nor can travellers' cheques.

There are money change facilities at Kathmandu airport both before and after immigration - whilst exchange rates are generally good here, it's worthwhile checking the change fees. You sometimes get a better rate for changing larger denomination notes. Most large hotels also offer a currency exchange service (including the Royal Singi Hotel). There are also countless money changers in the Thamel area of Kathmandu.

There are ATMs throughout Kathmandu, Pokhara and other major cities - often there are "ATM lounges" (a small room with numerous different ATMs). Some banks have a withdrawal limit equivalent to only GBP100 per time and as there is usually a transaction fee, if you need to withdraw more money than this you would be best to look for another ATM with a higher limit. The maximum withdrawal at a time is usually equivalent to about GBP300. Often ATMs are broken or run out of money so you may have to try several.

You will need to take out enough money in Kathmandu to last for the duration of your trek - to cover meals, drinks, tipping and other incidentals. It is a good idea to carry some spare cash on trek in case of an emergency. Your tour leader will advise roughly how much to take but please also see the Trip Notes for your holiday. Carrying a large amount of cash is unavoidable so we suggest splitting it up into a few different places - but remember to keep track of how much you have stashed where.

Everest Region: money change facilities are available in Lukla and Namche. There is an ATM in Namche Bazaar but it often doesn't work so please don't rely on it. Imported food and drink in the Everest Region can make some items relatively expensive (for example, a Mars bar will cost NPR100 at the start of the trek and NPR250 at the highest point of the trek) so you may want to bring some snacks with you from home/Kathmandu.

Annapurna Region: there is an ATM in Jomsom on the Mini Annapurna Circuit (but it doesn't always work) - the full Annapurna Circuit doesn't quite pass through Jomsom. There are no ATMs on the Annapurna Sanctuary Trek. There are both money changers and ATMs in Pokhara. Prices are a little lower here than in the Everest Region.

Langtang and Manaslu Regions: there are no ATMs and no money change facilities in these regions yet. Owing to its remoteness, the Manaslu Region is comparable to the Everest Region in terms of local costs.

If you have any unwanted Rupees at the end of the tour, you can only change these back at Kathmandu international airport on departure from Nepal. If you are changing over USD100 worth you will need to present your original exchange receipt. If changing less than USD100, Prabhu Bank will change this without a receipt. They may not always have all international currencies in stock but will have either GBP, or EUR or USD.

You should always inform your bank before leaving home so they don't try and block your card for security reasons, and also carry your bank's contact details in case there are any problems.

**Staff Tip:**

"If the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu gets to you, the Garden of Dreams on the edge of Thamel is a great escape. Set in beautiful grounds, it's a great place to sit and read or chat, and there is also a restaurant inside."

**Staff Tip:**

"Head down to the Everest Steak House in southern Thamel for a mouth watering steak and chips, well earned if you're just back from trek, and then finish it off with a cocktail in the legendary Tom & Jerry bar up the road. You can also head to Fire and Ice Pizzeria in Thamel, a great place with casual indoor and outdoor eating which is popular amongst travellers and locals alike. This restaurant is a great place to meet for a morning cup of Italian espresso, or a hearty meal of delicious pizzas, pastas, ice cream and even a Grappa!"

**Staff Tip:**

"Rum Doodles is the iconic restaurant to go to in Kathmandu after your trek and put a 'yeti foot' on the wall. Kilroys, in the Jyatha area of Kathmandu (close to Thamel), is another iconic restaurant, and was started by Thomas Kilroy who has cooked for many celebrities. The Royal dal bhat is good but save room for the deserts!"

**Exodus Client Tip:**

"If space and weight allows I would suggest taking some snack foods. A good old fashioned sugar fix is heaven up there. Mars bars and Snickers can be bought for a price but there is no guarantee they will be in date. The intensity of the trekking isn't really high enough to justify the need for sports supplement type energy bars but there's no harm in taking some if you like them."

Garry

Everest Base Camp

**SHOPPING**

Nepal abounds with great shopping opportunities, from Kathmandu and Pokhara to the enterprising villagers who set up souvenir stalls along the trekking trails! Some haggling is expected, so don't be shy, but try and aim for what you feel is a fair price, it's not about squeezing every last penny out.

Thamel

Located in the heart of Kathmandu, Thamel is the main tourist area in Kathmandu, packed with restaurants, bars and equipment stores. There are also a multitude of souvenir shops selling Nepali, Kashmiri and Tibetan crafts.

**Staff Tip:**

"There are a few branded outdoor shops around Thamel where you can pick up legitimate gear for western prices. There are also many local outdoor stores where you can pick up less high quality gear for sometimes a third of the price. It's impossible to guarantee the quality of anything you may purchase, so buyer beware."

Asan Bazaar

The market is an easy walk from the Jamal area. From Asan, you can continue walking and head to Kathmandu Durbar Square, a further 15 to 20 minutes' walk through the old market. As well as being a popular place for the local Kathmanduites to shop for fruit, vegetable, kitchen utensils and spices, it's also a good place to pick up Nepalese tea and local souvenirs, as well as just people watching!

Indra Chowk

On the way from Asan to Durbar Square, this bazaar is famous amongst the local women for its many ornament, jewellery and garment shops. When you're here, a must is the Pote Bazaar (bead market), tucked down a narrow alleyway in front of the Akas Bhairav Temple.

Kupondole

Situated around 4 miles south of Kathmandu, on the way to the city of Patan, this area has quite a few upscale Nepalese fabric and boutique stores, and is popular amongst the expat community. Some stores worth a visit are Dhukuti, run by the Association of Craft Producers; Mahaguthi, a fair trade store; and Sana Hastakala, who work directly with local people from all parts of Nepal.

**APPROXIMATE COSTS**

Evening meal in a tourist class restaurant	GBP10-15 / USD15-20
Bottled water or soft drink	GBP1 / USD1-1.30
Alcoholic drink	GBP2-3 / USD3-4

**FOOD & DRINK****Dal bhat tarkari**

The Nepal standard meal is available everywhere. It consists of bhat, which is rice; dal, which is lentil soup; and tarkari, which is curried vegetables. In some places you can also get an addition of masu, or meat curry. If you're hungry, it's the perfect choice as you can get as many refills as you want.

Momos

This Tibetan version of dumplings is a traditional delicacy and a must-try local dish while you are in Nepal. The dumplings are either steamed or fried, and come filled with chicken or buff (water buffalo) or vegetables. They have become the most famous fast food amongst Nepalese and can be found on the menus of most restaurants.

Kwanti soup

This mixed bean soup is usually served during festivals and family gatherings and has now made its way onto many restaurant menus. It goes particularly well with naan or roti bread.

Choela

This is a typical Newari dish consisting of smoked meat (chicken, lamb or buffalo) tossed with spices and mustard oil.

FOOD ON TREK

Food ordering in tea-houses

Most lodge menus are fairly similar in the food they offer, and the food is designed to be filling and provide carbs for energy, which is important at high altitude. The items on the menu can sometimes be a local interpretation of a certain dish and your pizza is not guaranteed to be the same as your local takeaway! While we always include breakfast in our trekking trip cost, we do not include lunch and dinners, to allow more flexibility in what you eat. Appetites can also often be reduced at high altitude, so you can simply choose what you actually want to eat yourself.

Every lodge has a menu and a food ordering book. You write everything you order under your name and room number, and your bill is then calculated in the morning before you leave. Lunch is normally eaten in a lodge along the trekking route, and we suggest the group tries to order similar dishes (where possible) at lunchtime, otherwise the meal can take a long time to prepare. It is customary to leave a small tip (NPR30/40 per person) when paying any bill.



Staff Tip:

"In the evenings, try to order dinner at least two hours in advance if you can, as the kitchens can be very busy cooking for lots of groups."

Typical Meals

If you have any dietary issues, please speak to the leader before you leave Kathmandu and give them a list of foods you can and cannot eat.

- In the tea-houses breakfast will comprise of a choice of bread (a slice of toast, chapatti or Tibetan bread), a choice of egg (boiled, fried or omelette), and a choice between either muesli or porridge each day. Hot tea/coffee will also be served. On specific days, there will not be a choice for breakfast and either a trekker's breakfast (egg, hash brown, baked beans and toast) or a pancake with jam/honey will be served - these options are not available in all tea-houses and so we have only included them in locations where they can be guaranteed.
- Unfortunately it is very difficult to cater for gluten free/coeliac diets in particular on Nepal treks. There will be a very limited choice of food, and breakfasts will mainly comprise of fried rice or egg - so expect it to be repetitive. We recommend bringing some of your own food to supplement what's available in the tea-houses.
- For lunch and dinners, there will usually be various soups on offer to start. For the main course there will be rice dishes (e.g. vegetable or egg fried rice, rice and curry), potato dishes (fried potatoes with vegetables, chips, hash browns with cheese or eggs) and pasta dishes (spaghetti with tomato sauce, pasta with fried vegetables).
- There will always be dal bhat, the typical Nepali meal consisting of as much rice, lentils and vegetable (sometimes meat) curry as you can eat!
- For desert there will be items such as apple pie, custard or rice pudding.
- Please note that fresh meat, fruit and vegetables are often not readily available in the mountains, especially in winter in the Everest Region. We advise against eating meat on Nepal treks, particularly in spring when the weather is warmer as it has often been carried unrefrigerated in the heat from lower altitudes for several days.
- You can buy sweets, snacks and biscuits all along the route from tea-houses and small shops, but you may want to take a supply with you from home, as the quality is not always great.



Staff Tip:

"My personal favourite site to visit is the Pashupatinath Temple to the north east of Kathmandu city centre. Regarded as one of the holiest temples of Lord Shiva, it's so old that scholars still aren't quite certain when it was founded. Like Varanasi in India, cremation pyres line the banks of the Bagmati River, and it's one of the most fascinating places in Kathmandu to people watch. Large numbers of sadhus, or holy men, with long dreadlocks and ash covered bodies, can be found here."

DRINKING WATER

- The lodges provide boiled water which is safe to drink and charge a fee for this.
- It is Exodus' aim to eliminate the use of plastic mineral water bottles on all of our trips, and we're pretty much there! Bottled water is available everywhere but where there's a suitable alternative, we strongly request that you consider it.
- Tap water is available for free at the lodges but should be treated before drinking, so you should carry some form of water purification treatment with you on trek. Whilst traditional purification tablets are widely available, there are various modern technologies which are far more effective - for trekking in Nepal our personal recommendation is a SteriPEN or similar type of hand-held UV water purifier (available from online retailers) because it functions in the cold and can treat 1-litre of water in a couple of minutes. Look for lightweight models with lithium batteries.
- On the Annapurna Circuit (TNQ) trek, there are safe drinking water stations in many villages. The water is safe to drink, costs NPR35/50 per litre, and your leader will advise where these water stations are located. On the Annapurna Sanctuary (TNS) trek, mineral water is banned in the Sanctuary and you must either treat water yourself or buy boiled water.
- On the Annapurna in Luxury Trek (TNX) and Edits trip (ENX) you will be given safe drinking water during the trek, as well as at the tented river camp on the Edits trip.

SIGHTS & EXCURSIONS

There are a huge array of sights in Kathmandu but some of the most iconic are the Hindu temple at Pashupatinath, the largest Tibetan Buddhist stupa in Nepal at Boudhanath, the monkey temple at Swayambhunath and the temples in the Durbar Square of Kathmandu. If you have more time, the ancient cities of Bhaktapur and Patan in the Kathmandu Valley are also worth a visit. Both have interesting Durbar Squares and the museum in the old Royal Palace in Patan is very interesting. Bhaktapur is more medieval and the potters square and back streets are well worth a wander. Arrangements and prices are available locally.

Everest scenic flight

It's usually possible (time and weather allowing) to do a scenic flight over Everest, and the cost should be approximately GBP165 / USD215 (including transport both ways) per person. You can pay in Sterling or Euros, with an extra 4% charge for credit cards. While we can assist with details on how to book the flight, Exodus does not deal directly with booking them and take no responsibility for the trips.



IF YOU'RE...

TREKKING IN THE EVEREST REGION

LUGGAGE

The flight to Lukla has a maximum luggage allowance of 10kg for checked in luggage and 5kg for hand baggage, and the airport staff can be quite strict about this during peak season due to the size of the aircraft. If they allow bags on which are over the limit, then they charge approximately GBP1 / USD1.30 per kilo over. Porters carry two kitbags each and a small bag of their own gear, whilst yaks carry four kitbags each, therefore please respectfully try and limit yours to approx. 10kg each in consideration of porter (and animal) welfare.

The flights in and out of Lukla are subject to weather conditions and delays are possible. Should this happen, please be patient, as your leader and Exodus will be doing what they can to resolve the situation as quickly as possible.



Staff Tip:

"I found the market in Namche Bazaar excellent for topping up on gear when trekking in the Everest Region.

The quality is good and prices surprisingly competitive with Thamel. Namche is also the last place to get a decent cappuccino and the best hot apple pie I have ever had!"

SIGHTS & EXCURSIONS

Whilst on trek, don't forget to:

- Have a hot chocolate at the Japanese built Everest View Hotel, with some of your first views of Everest.
- The homemade cookies and apple pie in Kyanjuma are delicious! Grab some of the freshly baked cookies to munch on later.
- In Dingboche, make time to go out at sunset to see the beautiful orange glow over Lhotse.
- At Lobuje, walk up onto the edge of the Khumbu Glacier before dinner for great views of the sun setting on Nuptse.



Staff Tip:

"Take lots of snacks, water and warm clothes and your torch for the trek from Gorak Shep to Base Camp and back. It's a fantastic walk but a long one, and it will be late afternoon by the time you get back to the lodge."



TREKKING IN THE ANNAPURNAS

LUGGAGE

The flights to and from Pokhara have a maximum luggage allowance of 15kg for checked in luggage and 5kg for hand baggage, and the airport staff can be quite strict about this during peak season due to the size of the aircraft. If they allow bags which are over the limit, then they charge approximately GBP1 / USD1.30 per kilo over.

Porters carry two kitbags each and a small bag of their own gear, therefore please respectfully try and limit yours to approx. 10kg each in consideration of porter welfare.



If you have a flight to or from Jomsom, please note the allowance for here is just 10kg plus 5kg hand luggage.

SIGHTS & EXCURSIONS

If you have some free time in Pokhara, you can take a boat trip around Phewa Lake, visit the International Mountain Museum, or perhaps the Tibetan Refugee Camp, or hire a bicycle and ride part way around the lakeside. There are plenty of restaurants and bars along the main street, plus various shops and stalls selling souvenirs.



Exodus Client Tip:

"Get fit before you go, some people find the steps tough going. Toilets are basic, but you get used to that, showers are interesting, so be prepared for a quick cold wash some days. Get up before sunrise and enjoy the mornings, after all the sun rises at 6 am-ish, and you have to be ready to walk by 7.30, so don't waste the sunrises, especially if you like photography. You can charge camera batteries usually, but take a spare and keep them charged. It's cold at the top, so sleep with your batteries."

Chris

Annapurna Sanctuary

GOING TO CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK

In Chitwan, elephant-back riding and bathing elephants is still commonplace, however, this is against Exodus Travels' Animal Welfare Policy and we do not support these practices. As such, we do not include these activities in any of our tours and we would ask you to refrain from partaking. If you must, please be aware that Exodus leaders will not assist you in organising this.

As an alternative means to view the wildlife, we offer a jeep safari. You will hopefully see the Indian one-horned rhinoceros and several species of deer but you shouldn't get your hopes up about spotting a tiger, as sightings are incredibly rare. We also explore the Rapti River by dugout canoe looking for crocodile and at the abundant bird life.

On all excursions in Chitwan you will be accompanied by a skilled naturalist guide from the lodge.



Get up early for a dawn walk through the jungle, but wear full length trousers and long socks to keep the leeches and ticks away!

MEDICAL INFORMATION

There is a low risk of Malaria in Chitwan but anti-malaria tablets are not normally recommended (please consult your GP or a travel clinic for the latest advice). Nevertheless, you should take precautions such as wearing long trousers and sleeves and using mosquito repellent.

Tips & Advice for Travelling Sustainably...

Sustainable Travel is central to the ethos of Exodus. We design and operate our holidays in a way that gives the highest degree of long-term economic benefit to the host communities, whilst also minimising the impact on the environment. We believe that travel should encourage positive cultural exchanges and the below tips are designed to help you get the most out of your holiday as well as making a genuine contribution to the people and places visited.

- 2015 Earthquake Appeal – Thanks to over 3,500 individual donations from our clients, Exodus raised over GBP260,000 / USD336,000 to help Nepal following the earthquakes which struck in the Spring of 2015. This has been used to provide emergency relief in the aftermath of the quake, gone towards rebuilding nearly 100 homes for Exodus staff and their families and will also be funding a medical camp in the mountains.
- The Nepalese greeting is 'namasté' – with hands held in front of the face, the higher they are held, the more respect it exudes. Men will shake hands with men but not with women.
- A side-to-side bob of the head signals 'yes' and a nod of the head 'no'.
- Pointing your feet (the least sacred body part) at people or religious places, or pointing or beckoning with a single finger is considered impolite.
- Be respectful – displays of affection should be kept at bay, and loose-fitting clothing that covers legs and shoulders is advisable, especially when visiting homes, monasteries or temples.
- Walk in a clockwise direction around temples or monuments. Ask permission before entering places of worship and remove your shoes. Leave leather behind before entering Hindu temples.
- Do it like the locals! The left hand is associated with toilet duties, so eat, wipe your mouth, pass food, give and receive with your right hand. Only handle your own food and drink.
- When trekking, biodegradable soap, shampoo, and toilet paper are recommended. Leave all packaging at home and only leave burnable rubbish in bins on trek.
- Avoid using plastic bottles or buying mineral water and instead use re-fillable water bottles wherever possible. Buy boiled water or carry water purification treatment.
- Keep to paths to reduce damage to plants & disturbances to wildlife.
- Ask before you capture people on camera. Exchanging a few words or gestures before-hand can go a long way. Offering (and actually sending) a copy via post is a great way to benefit both parties!
- Try to buy locally made handicrafts but be wary of items made from wild animals eg. shahtoosh shawls made from endangered Tibetan antelope.
- Don't spoil the fun of haggling! Remember that driving unfair prices affects local livelihood, while over-paying adds to inflation.
- Tipping is appreciated for good services. This includes porters, who should only carry reasonable amounts.
- If you wish to give, we would discourage giving directly to children as this can encourage begging, and please be wary that access to dental care in mountain villages is limited so giving sweets is also not encouraged.
- Exodus Travel's Himalayan Community Project supports some of the communities in Nepal. If you wish to donate, go to <https://exodus.charitycheckout.co.uk/HCP>



The information provided is given in good faith and is subject to change. If you have returned from your trip and found anything within this document which is incorrect, please help us keep it up to date by emailing customerops@exodus.co.uk. Likewise, if you have a tip you would like to share with future clients, please let us know and we will hope to include it in future editions. Please note that some of the information provided here is personal opinion and does not form part of our contract with clients.