

NEPAL

Nepal is a country of amazing extremes. Gigantic mountains give way to towering hills above lush valleys that gently roll down to the forested plains in which the stately tiger and the unique rhinoceros roam freely. All this in a country that is, on an average, 120 miles wide.

Bound by Tibet in the north and India on the other three sides, Nepal lies in the temperate zone, but the weather and terrain are greatly influenced by the altitude, which in Nepal ranges from almost sea level in the south to the highest point on earth.



Nepal's population of about 26 million consists of 36 different races and tribes, each wearing their own traditional costumes and speaking a different language or dialect. All these races and tribes coexist peacefully by embracing Hinduism or Buddhism, the country's two major religions. The harmony and in which these various races and tribes exist is one of the remarkable features of Nepal.

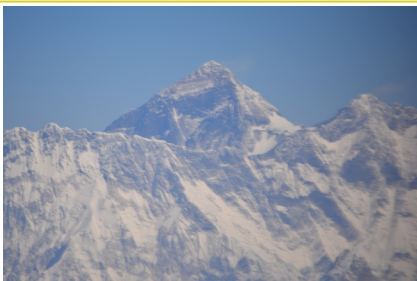
EXPLORE NEPAL(12DAYS) LAND COST: US\$ 1650.00 + INTERNAL AIR: \$125.00



The very word "Nepal" invokes visions of high mountains, remote valleys and hardy explorers foregoing all creature comforts to test themselves against nature and her forces. However, long before the first mountaineers ventured north to the jagged horizons of rock and ice; long before the first rafter or kayaker descended the rivers; long before the first trekkers appeared on the ridges; the Nepalese were building palaces, temples, monasteries and complex townships to rival those anywhere else in the world. Arts and crafts flourished – so much so, that artisans and

builders traveled as far as Beijing in China to build temples and Pagodas. The lost way method of metal casting was perfected, woodworking and carving attained new heights, stone carving and painting as devotional excises became art forms. Perhaps these are among the many reasons why, just in the vicinity of the Kathmandu valley alone, there are seven UNESCO designated World Heritage Sites, within a 13-mile radius. This trip is designed to introduce to you the essence of Nepal. The heritage sites and museums, stunning mountain scenery and model conservation and preservation efforts; all of which go to make Nepal one of the most exciting destinations in the world.

EVEREST BASE CAMP TREKKING(18DAYS) LAND COST: US\$ 1580.00 + INTERNAL AIR: \$362.00



This 18 days trek begins with an "eye opening" flight to Lukla at 9200 feet. The trek passes through the picturesque Sherpa village of Namche Bazaar to Gorak Shep culminating in the "ascent" of Kala Pattar (18000 feet from where classic views of Everest and its surrounding peaks are available. Most of the trek is spent above altitudes of 9800 feet in the Khumbu and Imja valleys whose skylines are dominated by the massive peaks of the Eastern Himalaya. Although this is a short trek, by Nepal standards, there will be plenty of time to enjoy the culture of the Sherpas,

visit ancient monasteries and learn how Lamaistic Buddhism influences Sherpa life. Stop at any of the numerous tea houses sip a glass of sweetened tea or *Chang* (millet beer) and get a taste of hospitality unique to the Sherpas Beautiful, multi-hued prayer flags, prayer wheels and intricately-carved Mani stones line every hilltop, rock wall and trail side singing prayers to the gods with every breeze and every passing traveler.

ANNAPURNA SANCTUARY (16DAYS) LAND COST: US\$ 1375.00 + INTERNAL AIR: \$250.00

"Annapurna Sanctuary" as the place is known to the Nepalese is considered sacred, though there is no documentation to show how long this state of affair has prevailed. It is, however, certain that it was so, long before the first trekkers appeared. The Annapurna Sanctuary forms a natural amphitheater, ringed by Annapurna South and I, Varahashikhar, Gangapurna and Machhapuchhare or "Fish Tail" as it is commonly known. The Sanctuary falls within the area managed by the Annapurna Conservation Area Project and is an exercise in environmental and cultural protection accommodating the needs of both the visitors and the local

inhabitants. There is a good mix of high mountains and Himalayan culture on this trek. The Annapurna Himal lies between the Kali Gandaki and Marsyangdi river valley, forming a solid, mountain bastion. In its span of 40 miles, it encompasses some twelve peaks higher than 7000 m./ 22960 feet and numerous others over 6000 m/ 19680 feet. And, as rhododendron forests give way to bamboo groves which in turn vanish into the high, desert landscapes, people of Aryan stock give way to those of Mongoloid stock and the dominant religion changes from Hinduism in the lower reaches to Buddhism higher up.