



Annapurna & Dhaulagiri Community Trek

The Annapurna region of Nepal is a land so beautiful it has long been the ultimate trekking dream for hikers. Here, the sacred peaks of Annapurna, Machhapuchhre and Dhaulagiri, shining with snow year round, tower over ancient rhododendron forests, icy rivers and temperate jungles where tigers still roam. Plenty of trekkers come here for all this beauty – but few stray off the tourist routes. This trek will take you to off-the-beaten-track villages, where you will stay in village communities, sometimes even in people's homes, giving you first hand experience of the real Nepal.

Along the way we can visit a village weaving workshop, paper making workshop and cheese factory. We will spend a night at a yak farming project on the flanks of Annapurna range. The high point of this trek (quite literally), is a visit to the sacred Khayer Lake (4500m) surrounded with shrines and the peak of Annapurna towering above.

This is a trek for those with a real sense of adventure, who are happy to embrace basic living conditions in order to experience rural, mountain people's life in Nepal. This trek can be qualified as moderate, with occasional strenuous days and thus a reasonable level of fitness is required.

Accommodation on this trek is basic and on a shared basis, with little opportunity to wash either yourselves or your clothes, unless you wish to brave the cold communal village tap! A set of well-worn hiking boots, with a few pairs of good hiking socks are an absolute necessity. No technical experience or mountaineering gear is necessary. While porters will carry the majority of your luggage, you will need to bring a durable daypack to carry necessary items for quick access during the trek, such as water, toilet paper, camera, a warm layer, snacks etc. A full kit list will be sent to you upon confirmation of your participation on the trek.





Itinerary

Day 1: Trek briefing and preparation

Day 2: Fly or drive from Kathmandu to Pokhara. After lunch in Pokhara we drive to Beni to the trek start point (3 hours). Overnight in Beni (817m) in a simple hotel, on the banks of the Kali Gandaki River..

Day 3: Beni (817m) to Banskharka (1526m). 3-4 hours walk. We take it slowly and steadily, stopping often along the way, and are rewarded by our first spectacular views of the snow-capped mountains. It is an interesting walk through rural villages of different cultural communities. We will homestay in Banskharka.

Day 4: Banskharka (1526m) to Nagi (2320m). 5-6 hours walk. Nagi itself is home to remote wireless internet pioneer Mahabir Pun. Overnight in a community lodge offering opportunities to see village development projects, visit a school or just explore the village.

Day 5: Nagi (2320) to Mohare Danda (3320m). 6 hours walk. This day we will walk through rhododendron forests. We will carry pack lunches as there are no settlements along the way. You will get to see lots of bird life and maybe some wild animal as well. From this spot you will get to see views of the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna ranges.

Day 6: Mohare Dada (3320m) to Swanta (2300m). 7-8 hours walk. We depart Swanta through a giant rhododendron forest. We then cross the Annapurna Circuit route at Phalate and ascend to Swanta where we overnight in a community lodge.

Day 7: Swanta (2300m) to Khopra (3660m). 7-8 hours walk. A hard, but beautiful climb through lush forests. As we near the tree line, we may see yaks from a local Village Development Committee yak farming project. Once we near Khopra we should be treated with magnificent panoramic views of Annapurna South, Baraha Shikhar, Nilgiri, Dhaulagiri and Gurja Himal. Overnight in a community lodge with the yak farmer who also manages the relay station for the villages' wireless network.

Day 8: Rest day in Khopra or optional day hike. We depart early for the walk to Khayer Lake at 4500m. This high altitude lake is visited only rarely by pilgrims and is seldom seen by outsiders.

This is a long, hard day, usually about 10/11 hours walking for the return trip. We will however be rewarded for our efforts by magnificent mountain views along our route, and the opportunity to see this beautiful, often mirror-calm lake surrounded by mountains and shrines. Annapurna is right above us.

Day 9: Khopra (3600m) to Paudwar (2000m). 6 hours walk. A long descent, with inspiring views over Dhaulagiri and the Kali Gandaki River valley – the deepest gorge on earth. Overnight homestay in Paudwar village, a Magar village with about 350 houses. In Paudwar we can visit a cheese-making scheme, unique in this area.

Day 10: Paudwar (2000m) to Narchyang (2000m). 5 hours walk. Today we traverse around the hillside between Paudwar and Narchyang, with stunning views of the Kali Gandaki Valley. Overnight homestay in Narchyang, an isolated Magar village on the edge of the Kali Gandaki Valley.

Day 11: Narchyang (2000m) to Tatopani (1190m). 3 hours walk. An easy descent down to the Kaligandaki River and walk along the river to get to Tatopani for lunch. At Tatopani you can soak your weary legs in the famous hot springs. This town is busier than any other places we pass through, as this is on a main Annapurna Circuit trail. You'll be able to contrast this to the places you've seen, buy things in the bazaar – and more importantly, enjoy a hot shower.





Day 12: Tatopani to Pokhara. We will take a jeep/bus from Taopani to Beni and then retrace our journey back to Pokhara. Altogether it's about 5 hours drive. Over night in Pokhara.

Day 13: Pokhara to Kathmandu: Fly or drive to Kathmandu

This trek emphasises:

- >> Respect of the local people
- >> Respect of their living habits, customs and religion
- >> Use of local community lodges and people's homes for lodging and local products for eating
- >> Protecting the natural and human habitat

Costs

For costs and further inquiries please contact us on info@himalayanquests.com

Notes

- >> The trek itinerary is a guide only and may be subject to change at short notice
- >> In order to preserve the remote nature of this trek, it is limited to a maximum of 12 trekkers.

