



Fully Inclusive Slow Travel Adventure  
11 Days • Nepal

## ESSENTIAL EVEREST

If you only ever visit Nepal once in your life, make it this trip. From the streets of Kathmandu to the forests of Shivapuri, to the Sagarmatha National Park and the highest mountain in the world. Nepal at its best.



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## WHY WE LOVE IT

If you've dreamed of visiting Everest but know you don't want to climb it, this might be the trip for you. We make the most of helicopter services to get us up close to Everest, and explore some stunning valleys in the Sagarmatha region. The tour design moves gradually through the elevations to ensure you don't suffer from moving too high too fast.

Before we head towards our views of Everest this tour gives you a close up look at what makes Kathmandu unique. We visit some amazing cultural treasures and taste a variety of Nepalese cuisines. We then head north of the city and deep into the forests to connect with beautiful rivers and lush jungles. For two nights we stay on the doorstep of the Himalayas, high above the valley and with views to Langtang.

This itinerary is absolutely unique. There are genuine moments of adventure, very intimate connections to the local culture, and a variety of accommodation standards.

## ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS

### Arrival in Kathmandu

- Our team will collect you at Kathmandu Airport
- All meals and transport are included during the tour

### Kathmandu City (1400m)

- Morning at Swayambunath to greet the sun
- An introduction to Newari and Sherpa cuisine
- Sunset at Boudhanath for Tibetan prayers

### Shivapuri (2200m)

- Meet the nuns of Nagigumba
- Jeep drive through the National Park
- Cabins with views of Langtang
- Village walks to meet Tamang community

### Lukla (2800m)

- Jeeps and a plane to reach the famed town of Lukla
- Acclimation for two nights
- Meet the local yaks and coffee shops

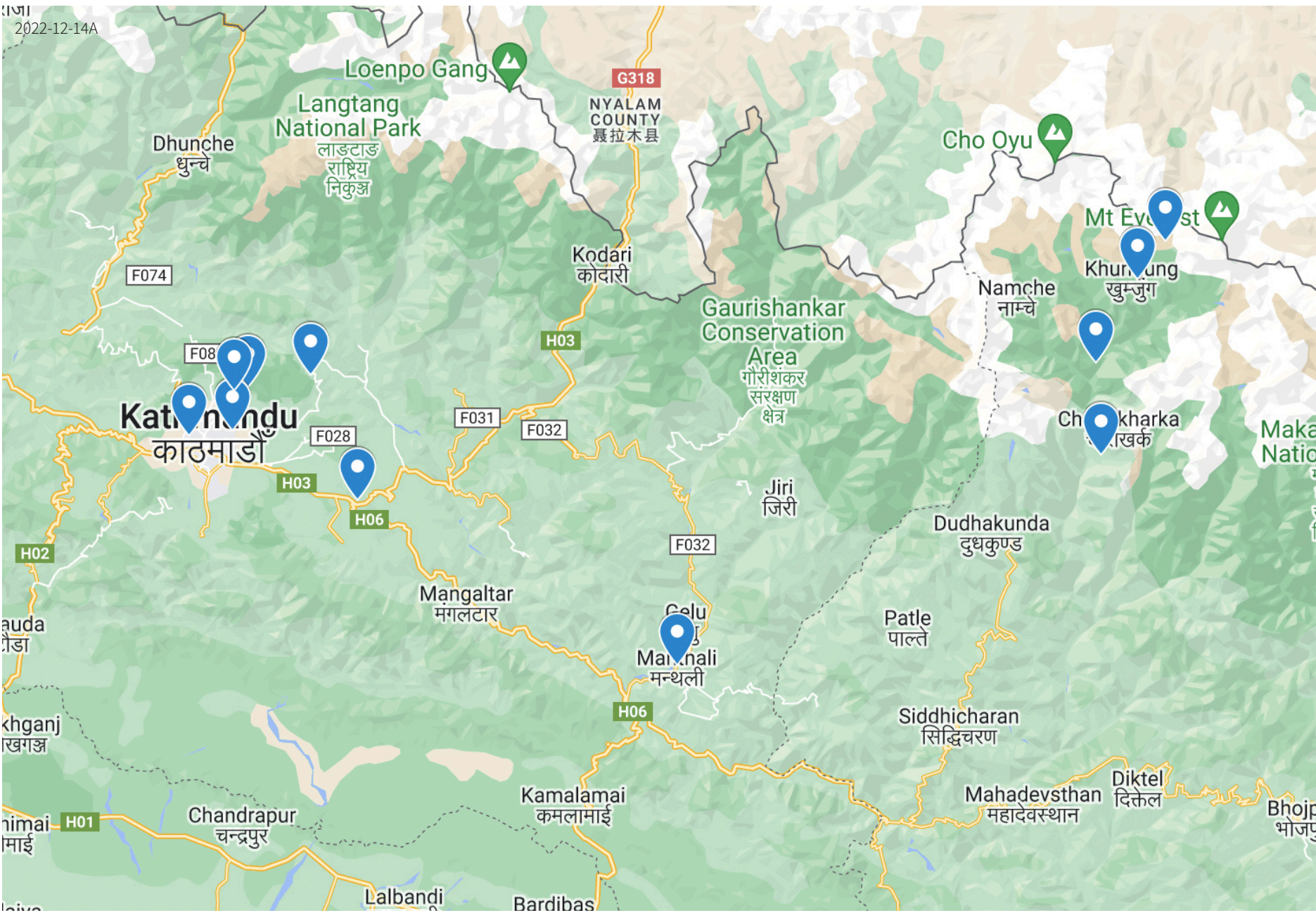
### Syangboche (3880m)

- Helicopter transfer to Everest View Hotel
- Acclimation and explore local villages
- Scenic heli-touring of Sagarmatha region (5100m)
- Return to Kathmandu by helicopter



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# ESSENTIAL EVEREST



## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day 1 • KATHMANDU ARRIVAL

If you plan to arrive a day or two early we can arrange for pre-tour accommodation at our group hotel in Thamel, located just inside the old town. Most arrivals will be landing in Kathmandu during the day, so we schedule the group meeting for 4pm and then head to dinner. It's about a 30 minute transfer to reach the hotel, and this is included in the package.

### Day 2 • KATHMANDU TEMPLES

Our two favourite temples in Kathmandu are best enjoyed at dawn and dusk. Swayambunath is the "Monkey Temple", a cluster of chortens, halls and stupa built into the hill top. The nearby forest provides ample habitat for the monkeys to live, while the temple provides an impressive habitat for the monkeys to play in. Buddhist and Hindu devotees visit Swayambunath every morning to greet the sun over Kathmandu. We can visit other temples during the day depending on your energy levels, but in the afternoon we head to the magnificent stupa of Boudhanath. Tibetan devotees visit here every day to pray and chant, and there are also rooftop cafes and bars for tourists to enjoy scenic views across the complex. We stay at Boudhanath until dark then eat local for a taste of Tibetan style cuisine.

### Day 3 • SHIVAPURI

We leave the city and head for the broadleaf forests to the north of town. We stop along the way to meet some of the nuns at Nagigumba, where they have a magnificent view across Kathmandu Valley. After lunch we drive deeper into the park towards our resort on the northern side. It's a very bumpy road and accessible by 4WD only. It's worth a stop for some rivers and waterfalls along the way. We have cute little cabins amongst the marigolds, and with a little clear weather we can get great views to the mountains of Langtang.

### Day 4 • SHIVAPURI

We have a whole day to breathe in the Himalayan views, and stretch our legs downhill to visit some local farming communities with the Gurung and Tamang people. If we feel like an easy walk after breakfast we can also head to a nearby hill-top town for a different view of Langtang and surrounds. This part of Shivapuri is a great place to try some classic Nepali dishes for lunch and dinner.

### Day 5 • RAMECHHAP

Yes that's the correct spelling! Today is a long drive to exit the forests of Shivapuri, and head east towards the foothills of Nagarkot. This section requires a 4WD vehicle. Once back on the main highway we follow the Tama Koshi River all the way to Ramechhap. Overnight here is essential for the early flight the next day. Accommodation is very basic here, nothing too glamorous.



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### **Day 6 • LUKLA**

We'll be on a morning flight from Ramechhap to Lukla. The weather dictates the flying schedule, so we may arrive before lunch or we may not. The locals say "Bistari Bistari", which means slowly slowly. Lukla is only accessible by flying or trekking trail, there is no road or 4WD access at present. When we land we have porters to help get our luggage to the hotel. It's very cold up this high (2800m) but we do have electric blankets to help make conditions a little bit more comfy.

### **Day 7 • LUKLA**

Today is a slow day, by design. We need to acclimate to the elevation and our suggestion is to take things gently. The main activities in town include shopping for puffy jackets, photographing yaks, ordering coffee and watching the planes take off at the airport.

### **Day 8 • SYANGBOCHE**

There's a very pretty trail from Lukla to Syangboche, but we have no intention of using it. Helicopter services will do the heavy lifting for us, carrying our luggage and our group up the mountain from 2800m to 3880m at Syangboche. They land right next to the Everest View Hotel, where we get amazing views of the mountains in all directions and a decent mug of hot chocolate. Today is another acclimation day, having gained over a kilometre of elevation.

### **Day 9 • SYANGBOCHE**

There are some short walks and not so short walks available depending on your mood. Even staying close to the hotel provides some incredible scenery and worthy walks. The nearby village of Khumjung has a nice gompa plus a coffee shop with fresh cakes daily. Back at Syangboche we keep an eye out for signs of the local Tahr (mountain goats) and various birds that choose to winter near the hotel.

### **Day 10 • EVEREST TO KATHMANDU**

This is the big event. First light on the mountains is our signal for the helicopter pilots to get moving, and we fly our group deeper and higher into Sagarmatha National Park. We'll land at Kala Pattar (5,100m) for views of Mount Everest itself, looking down on Everest Base Camp, and also make a stop a little lower down to get up close with the glacial rivers and lakes.

We make special arrangements to spend quality time on the ground. This is not merely a scenic flight, this is an immersive experience with the most remarkable mountains on the planet. We do not want to rush that.

After our Everest heli-touring we head back to Syangboche to collect the luggage, then transfer to Kathmandu by helicopter. This gives us a secure route back to Kathmandu without being subjected to the variability of Lukla's runway. We make a booking at our favourite eatery in Thamel in the confidence we shall arrive in time for dinner!

### **Day 11 • DEPARTURE**

We depart Kathmandu with transfers to your flights, or you can extend the stay with additional travel plans around Kathmandu Valley.



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## TOUR INCLUSIONS

- Airport transfers in Kathmandu
- Domestic flights and helicopter services in Nepal
- Accommodation based on single rooms. Discount offered for couples and friends who twin-share.
- Visitor Fees and Permits for access to national parks
- All meals (lunch, dinner and breakfast)
- Services of an experienced professional licensed tour/walking guides
- Host from Be Your Best in addition to local guides
- Sightseeing activities, museum fees, monument fees, travel permits.
- Tea and coffee with all meals. Bottled water at hotels and on the road.
- All tipping for local guides is included too

## ACCOMMODATION

When in Kathmandu we stay in the old part of town but still enjoy a modern style of hotel with contemporary comfort and amenities. Once we leave Kathmandu the accommodation is far more variable, but will always be the absolute best available for that location. There will always be a private ensuite for all rooms.

We have charming country cabins for our stay in Shivapuri. In Lukla we stay at the Yeti Mountain Lodge which features electric blankets in all rooms. You'll need them! Everest View Hotel is the best accommodation for miles in any direction, but it's definitely not five-star. They do their best to provide a high level of service but the 1980s are still alive and well in this hidden patch of the Himalayas! The views are amazing, however, and that's why we come back.

You can expect to have access to electricity every night and a chance to recharge camera batteries, phones, plus access to complimentary wifi. Hot showers are typically solar powered and at some locations there may be certain times of day when the hot water service is more reliable.



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## UP CLOSE WITH EVEREST

This tour will not have you standing on Mount Everest, but it will get pretty close. We land our helicopter on the nearby mountain of Kala Pattar and look down on Everest Base Camp below. Above the camp will be Everest itself, known by the Tibetan name of Chomolungma and in Nepali as Sagarmatha. Other peaks in the Sagarmatha National Park will grab your attention however, and many offer more dramatic and imposing views.

We watch Everest for several days from the Everest View Hotel, as we acclimate to the elevation. Lotse, Toboche, Kangeqa and Ama Dablam will all make an impression on you. And sometimes it's not even the mountain peaks that steal your breath, but the glacial lakes or just a meadow of daisies.

Even up here there is wildlife to enjoy. Wild goats, Tahr and even snow leopards manage to survive the winters around Everest. We won't see many of the big cats for sure, but we will see and hear a few lovely Himalayan birds during our stay at Everest View Hotel.

## MORE THAN JUST EVEREST

We've designed this tour for people who want to experience Nepal, not just Mount Everest. Before heading high into the Himalayas we start with a taste of Kathmandu and what makes it so unique, an exploration into the broadleaf forests of Shivapuri to the north of the city, then track back through Kathmandu Valley to the foothills below Everest before flying high into the mountains.

When you go home from this tour you will have met Buddhist monks, yak herders, tandoori chefs, Tamang farmers, Newari craftsmen, chai makers and more.

For many people Nepal is a once in a lifetime trip, so our tour design takes into account that you don't want to miss out on the things that make Nepal so special. A mix of Nepalese cultures, delicious cuisine, local markets and a chance to step into the old town of Kathmandu and immerse in the vibrance (and chaos) that is Nepal.



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## TAKING TIME

It's taken us a decade to gather up the right expertise to run this tour in Nepal. We know where the best momos are in Kathmandu, which guesthouses make the fluffiest pancakes, and where to find a freshly squeezed pomegranate juice. We're fussy about where we dine for a meal, which family we stay with in the mountains, and how many passengers are riding in each jeep.

We recognise that for most travellers this trip may be the one time in their entire lives they get to visit Nepal, and we want to make that experience the best it can be.

We don't do trekking. We design itineraries that are genuinely gentle and deeply culturally connected. By planning very gradual acclimation and making the most of helicopter services, we make it possible for you to visit the highest mountain in the world. It's something very special.

We go slow on our tours. We don't try to cram a week into a day, rather we try to fully enjoy the few places we visit. This tour a slow travel experience, not a race!

Cuisine in Nepal is always a cultural opportunity, and a chance to taste a range of influences from India to Tibet, and all points in between. There are short walks on offer through this itinerary, but you don't need any training or special preparation to complete the journey.

Your daypack need contain little more than sunglasses, a bottle of water and a jacket in case the weather changes. We've taken the time to make this tour the best it can be. We want you to take the time to experience what makes Nepal so special.



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## MEALS

Food in Nepal is a genuine highlight of the experience. Dal Bhat (rice and lentils) is the national dish and for many Nepali people they are happy to have it two or three times a day, every day. Our culinary journey experience will be more diverse, although the dal bhat option does vary from place to place and is often the best choice on the menu. Indian and Tibetan influences will be common place too.

Your host from Be Your Best will have a handful of favourite places to dine, and will do their best to ensure you get to sample a wide variety of delicacies. For vegetarians, travelling in Nepal is an absolute delight. The range of options is always delicious and vegetarian is the default setting for the most of the country.

## WEATHER

We schedule our Nepal travels for the edge of winter, when the air is clear and there is very little rainfall. The nights are cool in Kathmandu and warm in the daytime, but once we get into the mountains the nights are much colder and can even get down to zero sometimes.

When out in the sunlight you will often be warm enough to wear only pants and a shirt. The afternoon breeze in the lower reaches of the mountains can be very cool indeed, so a good wind-stopper jacket is essential even when setting out in bright sunshine.

A detailed packing list provided to our travellers in advance of the tour.

## AIRPORT PICKUP

Part of Kathmandu's charm is the chaos and you'll enjoy that even more knowing you have a dedicated pickup from the airport to our hotel. We collect flight details for your arrival in order to ensure we have someone waiting for you as you exit the terminal. A guide and a driver will ensure you are taken directly to the hotel. We also drop off to the airport when it's time to catch your flight home.

If planning to arrive a few days early or stay a few days later we will still include the airport service.

## SIM CARD

For those who need to be contactable at all times, it's easy for us to arrange a local SIM card for your time in Nepal. This must be done while in Kathmandu and costs less than US\$30 inclusive 20gig of data. Just make sure you bring an unlocked phone if planning to use a local SIM card.

## TIPPING

Tips for local trekking guides, driver are included in tour price so tipping is not necessary.



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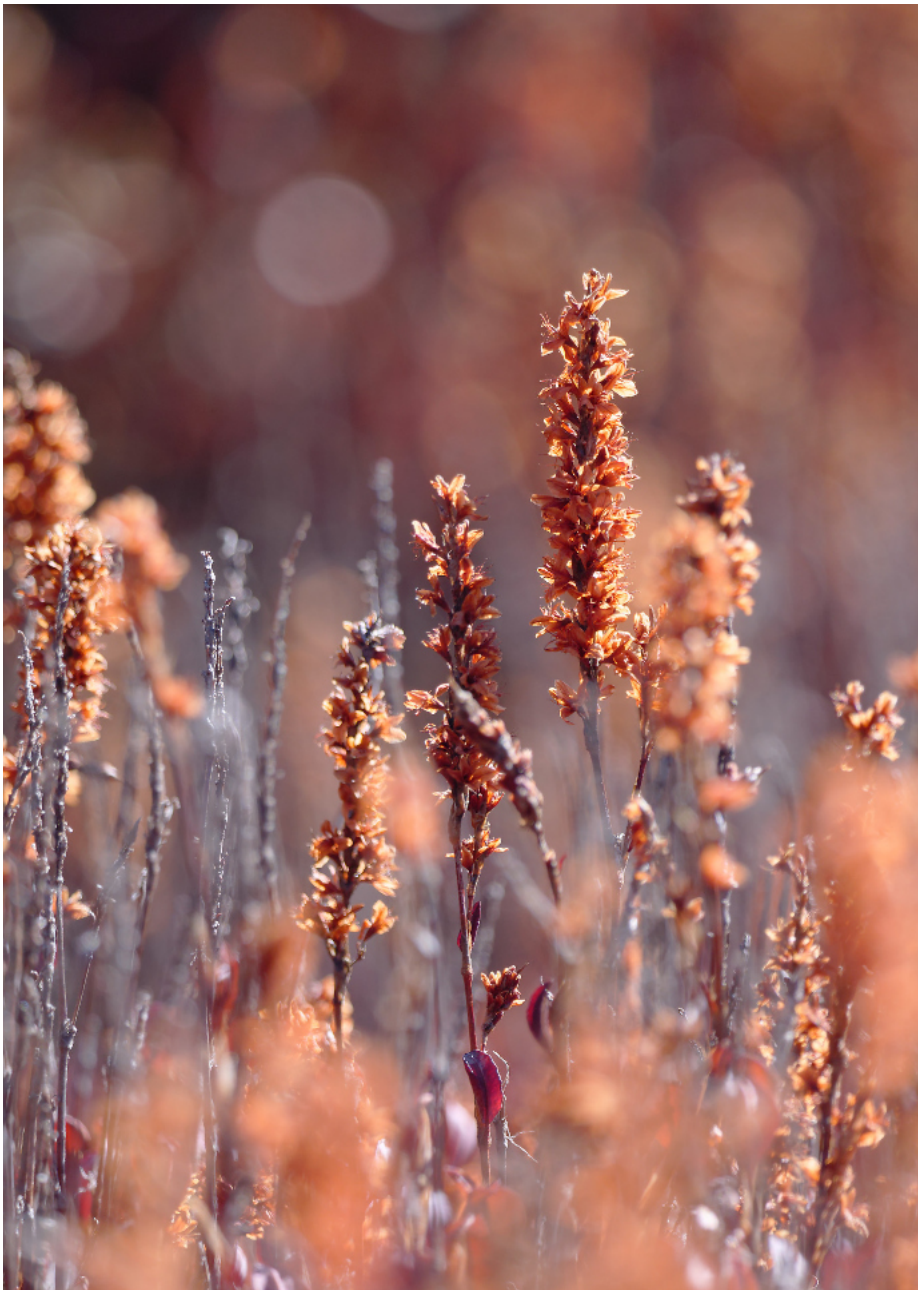
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## IS ALTITUDE A PROBLEM?

Absolutely not! But it's always wise to ask first. We've been running trips in the Himalayas for over a decade now and we understand why many people are worried about the elevations.

This itinerary avoids any seriously tough changes in elevation, and we take time to acclimate at various altitudes so your body can adjust to the conditions. By the time we reach Kala Pattar and 5,300m, you will be very well acclimated and able to enjoy the moment.

There are times during the journey when you will feel a little breathless, but we have never had a guest suffer from "altitude sickness" on our Nepal or Bhutan adventures.

We'll do our best to help you keep hydrated and to stay within your limits. If you are taking medication for a heart condition, a lung condition or post-covid complications we ask that you consult with your doctor for advice on altitude and your condition.

## EAT LIKE A LOCAL

Most of our adventures in Nepal make a feature of the local cuisine. We're not super big fans of hotels in the Himalayas that try to offer "continental cuisine" as it usually turns out pretty bland and quite disappointing. We prefer to eat local.

Nepal offers an immense range of cultural influences, and that is reflected in the food. Your BYB host will have their own favourite local eats based on their experience. Often we opt to dine very local, shoulder to shoulder with the Nepalese folks. Sometimes that means a fabulous tandoori kitchen in Thamel, other times it might be a Sherpa restaurant at Boudhanath. We'll get you eating like a local and sampling some really great dishes.



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