

# TAILOR-MADE ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 Kathmandu

Arrival in Kathmandu (1360m): Welcome to the capital of Nepal. We will greet you at the airport and transfer you to your accommodation. If your arrival time permits, you can discover Kathmandu with its old streets, temples and shops; a first glimpse into Nepalese life.

*Accommodation: Hotel*

*Lunch not included*

### Day 2 Route: Kathmandu - Jagat (1120m)

Early departure by minibus for the village of Besishahar (850 m) where your porters are waiting. Then you continue by car to Jagat, the starting point of your trek. This long day's journey is rewarded on arrival by the magnificent setting of the Annapurnas massif.

*Route: 7 hours drive*

*Accommodation: Lodge*

### Day 3 Jagat - Dharapani (1975m)

Follow the Marsyangdi River as it ascends to Chamje, then climb 300 m up to the village of Tal found near an old lake dominated by a large waterfall. This afternoon, you follow a gentle slope and walk down to Dharapani, a beautiful village at the confluence of two rivers.

*Hiking: 7 hours*

*Elevation: +1000/-450*

*Accommodation: Lodge*

### Day 4 Dharapani - Chame (2715m)

It is a steep climb up to Timang. You cross a beautiful pine forest and from Koto, you have remarkable views of Annapurna II and the Manaslu. At Chame you enter the Buddhist country and

chortens, mani walls and prayer flags decorate the way.

*Hiking: 6 hours*

*Elevation: +980m/-240m*

*Accommodation: Lodge*

📍 **Day 5 Chame - Pisang (3314m)**

Today's trail crosses several Gurung villages and features lovely views of the Himalayan chain from Manaslu to Annapurna II. The landscapes become increasingly arid and few crops still persist. This afternoon, you can visit the village and monastery of Upper Pisang.

*Hiking: 6 hours*

*Elevation: +750m*

*Accommodation: Lodge*

📍 **Day 6 Pisang - Manang (3550m)**

Your journey continues to Manang, with views of a number of mythical Himalayan summits: Annapurnas IV, II, III, Gangapurna... You are walking through a truly exceptional setting... Depending on the form and the motivation of the group, it is possible to go through the old villages of Ghyaru and Ngawal along a beautiful balcony trail! (Count 1h of additional trekking for this alternative).

*Hiking: 6 hours*

*Elevation: +400/-100*

*Accommodation: Lodge*

📍 **Day 7 Manang: Rest Day**

A day of acclimatization in Manang, ideal for aiding our successful climb up of Thorong La passage. There are several possibilities of day or half-day excursions or just enjoy a the tour of the village.

*Accommodation: Lodge*

📍 **Day 8 Manang - Yak Kharka (4220m)**

This short and easy stage allows for regular acclimatization to the altitude. You leave the banks of the river Marsyangdi and begin an easy climb Yak Kharkha pasture Enjoy an afternoon at leisure to rest or take a gentle stroll.

*Hiking: 4 hours*

*Elevation: +730m/-50m*

*Accommodation : Lodge*

📍 **Day 9 Yak Kharka - Thorong Phedi (4624m)**

It is a short walk to Thorong Phedi (4624m). The path crosses yak pastures and alternates between uphill and downhill sections. You are slowly advancing towards the bottom of the valley to save your breath. This afternoon, you can enjoy a return trip to the base camp of the Thorong (+/- 400m).

*Hiking: 4 hours*

*Elevation: +1030m/-550m*

*Accommodation: Lodge*

📍 **Day 10 Thorong Phedi - Thorong La (5416m) - Muktinath (3802m)**

Very early morning departure for Thorong Pass, the highest point of our trek. The challenging climb is rewarded with simply fantastic views... After a tea and photo break at the pass, we begin the steep descent to Muktinath, the first Mustang village and religious sanctuary for Buddhists and Hindus alike. Visit the small sacred temple of Muktinath.

*Hiking: 7 - 8 hours*

*Elevation: +940m/-1620m*

*Accommodation: Lodge*

📍 **Day 11 Muktinath - Lupra - Jomsom (2700m)**

You leave Muktinath and traverse an easy pass, then the trek continues through beautiful alpine and arid high mountain landscapes. On the way, if you are little bit lucky, you may see the himalayan bharal or « blue sheep ». A relatively steep descent leads us to Lupra, Bon village hidden behind the gorges of the Lupra Khola. Far from the frequented trekking trails, Lupra has managed to preserve its charm intact. After a soothing stop in this calm village, you head towards the windy Kali Gandaki valley to reach Jomsom.

*Hiking: 5 to 6 hours*

*Elevation: 100m/-1200m*

*Accommodation: Lodge*

📍 **Day 12 Flight Jomsom – Pokhara**

Early this morning, you take an exciting flight from Jomsom to Pokhara. You will fly over Kali Gandaki Canyon, the deepest in the world, flanked by Annapurnas (8091m) and Dhaulagiri (8167m). Free time in Pokhara after lunch.

*Accommodation: Hotel*

📍 **Day 13 Drive: Pokhara – Kathmandu**

After Pokhara, we drive to Kathmandu through a vast stretch of Nepalese countryside. Upon arrival in Kathmandu, visit Swayambhunath, a huge hilltop Buddhist stupa which overlooks the sprawling valley of Kathmandu.

Accommodation: Hotel

📍 Day 14 **End of our services**

End of our services

The details in this programme are updated regularly but imponderables and unpredictable circumstances may result in inaccuracies. In order to provide the adventure which is best suited to your demands, the weather and the operational conditions, changes to the programme may be made. For safety reasons, we reserve the rights to interrupt your participation in this programme at any time if your technical level or fitness are deemed unsuitable or if you are seen as a danger to yourself or to those around you. This will in no case give rise to refunds or compensation.

## PERIOD & BUDGET

### When to travel?

The best period for travelling is during the following months:

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

Nov

Dec

### Price

**From 1070 US\$ per person (based on 2 travelers)**

*The budget is an indication of the price per person, subject to availability. Your local agent will send you a customized quote with the exact price. The price can vary according to availability, level of services, period of travel, number of participants, booking time frame and other items.*

### Included

- Transport by local vehicle according to itinerary
- Accommodation in 3 \* hotel or B&B in Kathmandu (Hotel Tibet, Manaslu or similar)
- Accommodation in a 2 \* hotel in Pokhara (Hotel Lake View or similar)
- Trek includes breakfasts and lodge accommodation
- Accompaniment by an English speaking Altaï Guide
- Visits as per itinerary: with a cultural guide and a private vehicle
- Porterage of luggage: up to 12kg maximum per person during the trek
- Trekking support team: assistants and porters
- Trekking permits: ACAP and TIMS
- Staff Insurance

### Not included

- Entrance to historical sites & monuments
- Meals in Kathmandu plus lunches and dinners throughout
- Nepalese visa: US \$ 25

- International flights
- Insurance: Repatriation, Medical & Helicopter Services
- Drinks, tips and personal expenses - all that is not in "THE PRICE INCLUDES"

## Notes

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*For many years, we put our know-how and our experience of Himalayan destinations to the service of travelers from different horizons. You may find yourself in an international group with participants from our various partners.*

### Level 4/5

This trip demands a very good physical condition, suitable clothing and good hiking boots. Regular and serious training (running, swimming, brisk walking...) during the 2 to 3 months prior to your trip is recommended. This trek includes an average of 5 to 6 hours of hiking per day and daily elevations of +/- 1000m.

## Terms and conditions

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### Booking conditions

Booking a trip with us implies acceptance of the terms and conditions of sale. Each customer is required to complete a registration form and, subject to availability at the time of registration, travellers are expected to pay a deposit of 30% of the total price to complete their booking. Payments can be made online or by bank transfer. You will receive an e-mail with your booking confirmation.

### Invoice procedure

Once your booking is confirmed you will receive an invoice by e-mail. The full balance of the trip must be received at least 30 days before your departure date. We reserve the right to cancel your booking, free of charge, if this deadline is not respected.

### Cancellation policy

If for any reason **you** have to cancel your trip, we require written confirmation of your decision so please contact us by e-mail, fax or letter. The money you have paid will then be refunded according to the following deductions:

- Cancellation received more than 30 days prior to the departure date: No cancellation fees.
- Cancellation received 30 to 21 days before the departure date: 30% of trip price will be retained.
- Cancellation received within 20 days of the departure date: 70% of trip price will be retained.

Please note if you decide to cancel your trip having agreed, in writing, to pay for additional tailor-made services (hotel, additional flights or activities...), these services are usually non-refundable.

If **we** have to cancel a departure due to an insufficient number of participants, you will be informed no later than 21 days before departure and a full refund will be issued, you will not be entitled to further compensation. We reserve the rights to cancel departures due to exceptional circumstances which may impact the safety of participants. Such circumstances may include those amounting to 'force majeure' in which case participants will receive a full refund but they will not be entitled to any

compensation.

### ***Changes to travel contract***

If you wish to make a change to your booking please contact us in writing; you will be expected to pay any fee which might arise from this change. In the event of unforeseen external events, Altaï Nepal may change some aspects of the travel contract. If any changes are necessary you will be informed as quickly as possible.

### ***Pricing***

The prices on our website are updated regularly and all of the prices we advertise are accurate when published. We reserve the rights to make changes to any of these prices. Before you make a booking we will give you the up-to-date price of your chosen holiday including any supplements, upgrades or additional activities you may have requested. If the number of travellers is fewer than the indicated number of participants on the website, a small group surcharge may be applied. For all of our trips we include details of services, prices and what is/is not included but please be aware that changes to the prices may be necessary in accordance with exchange rates or price changes of various components of the journey.

### ***Contract transfer***

If you are unable to travel for any reason, you can transfer your booking to another person in which case our modification conditions apply. Both the transferor and transferee will be jointly and severally liable for payment of the total holiday price and other associated expenses. Some airline carriers treat name changes as cancellations and you may be required to pay for the cost of a new ticket.

### ***Insurance***

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We strongly recommend that you take out personal travel insurance for your trip with Altaï Nepal as soon as your booking is confirmed. We advise you to purchase a travel insurance policy which covers flight cancellations, luggage loss and emergency health care. Please look carefully at which activities are covered by your insurer and do not forget to bring all necessary documents and information with you (name of the company, name of the contract, insurance policy number, telephone number...)

## **PRACTICAL INFO**

### ***Staff***

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Armed with an abundance of experience and a wealth of knowledge, our professional guides are all real experts. This trip is led by a professional Nepali English-speaking Tour Leader, who is part of the Altaï Nepal Team. During the trek, they will be assisted by junior guides, sirdar and porters.

### ***Food***

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#### **Lodge meals**

The international success of treks in the Annapurna and Everest regions influences the economy; tariffs for food and lodging are now set by the National Park and have increased sharply in recent

years, but quantities and quality of food have paradoxically decreased. To offset this decline in quality and quantity of food and in order to focus on the local economy, we plan Dal Bhat daily for our menus. It is a balanced dish, full of energy and nutritive intake, not fatty and above all, very digestible (digestion is more difficult at altitude). For all challenging treks, we provide energy snacks (like dried fruits). Meals in Kathmandu and in the valley are not included in the trip price. You will have plenty of time to discover Indian, Bhutanese, Chinese, Thai and other cuisines.

Please be aware that tap water is not normally drinkable. All drinks are at your own expense.

## ***Accommodation***

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In Kathmandu and other cities, you will normally be accommodated in 3 \* hotels. In more rural areas, we use homestay accommodation with varying comforts (they all have functioning beds, mattresses, tables, chairs, toilets, etc.) We love using homestay accommodation options which offer insights into Nepalese life and support local families. In addition, the use of lodges considerably reduces the number of porters and cut down the infrastructure of trekking.

## ***Transportation***

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Transport/transfer by bus, private minibus & plane.

## ***Budget & exchange***

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**The local currency is the Nepalese Rupee NPR.**

Visit <http://www.xe.com> for the latest currency converter and exchange rates.

You can withdraw Nepalese Rupees from in-country ATMs in Kathmandu and credit cards are accepted except in shops and hotels. Please budget for meals in Kathmandu, drinks, tips and other personal expenses.

## ***Tips***

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Tipping is very present in Nepal. It is an integral part of the 'tourism' culture of the country: independent of salary levels, your tip is seen as a sign of appreciation. The amount depends on your satisfaction with the services rendered and your generosity. Your guide will help you on this subject. Like money, if you have clothes to give, do not hesitate to seek advice from your guide who will make a fair distribution. We ask that you do not to give sweets and / or energy bars / chocolate to local children as there are virtually no dentists here in the mountains. The same rules apply to medicine, western medication is not necessarily adapted for the Nepalese and, moreover, following the correct dosage is extremely important.

## ***Vital equipment***

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- Warm Sleeping Bag
- Water purifiers (micropur, aguatabs ...)

**From head to toe:**

- A cap or sunhat
- 1 or 2 sets of thermals: long-sleeved thermal tops and full-length long johns

- Long sleeved and short sleeved t-shirts, preferably in quick-drying technical material
- A light fleece or equivalent (plus extra warm layers if necessary)
- A breathable wind proof, waterproof jacket (Gore-Tex...)
- Lightweight waterproof over trousers
- Suitable shorts
- Walking trousers
- A pair of high-rise walking boots - strength, good grip of the foot and ankle (high stems) and impermeability are essential. Choose shoes with non-slip soles (vibram).
- A pair of trainers/sandels or equivalent casual shoes for cities, villages and evenings
- Thick walking socks
- Warm gloves, hat and scarf (it can be chilly in the mountains)

### **Do not forget**

- Your personal toiletries and a fast drying towel
- Water bottle(s). Min. 2 litres, light and isothermal
- A good pair of sunglasses (think min. category 3)
- Sun-cream, face and lips
- Head torch and spare batteries
- A pocket knife
- A pair of hiking poles
- A waterproof bag cover (or plastic bags) to protect your belongings
- Toilet paper
- Anti-bacterial hand gel
- Your camera
- Notebook or travel diary

## ***Material***

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We prefer that you do not wear cotton clothing, including underwear, when participating in activities. When cotton gets wet from water or sweat it ceases to insulate and it does not dry fast. The best materials for outdoor activities are fast drying materials like polyester or materials which are warm when wet like wool.

The most powerful materials against the wind and rain are 'breathable' materials like Gore-Tex or Nikwax. Soft shell layers are effective against the wind.

### **Our advice for keeping warm**

Weather conditions in the high mountains can be variable, please think carefully about what clothes you pack especially for our winter trips and remember that the layers you wear next to your skin can make the biggest difference.

We recommend:

- No cotton
- Always carry dry spares of everything, including underwear and gloves

Wear multiple layers including:

1. A warm breathable base layer
2. A second thermal layer
3. Wind and water proof protective outer layers

## ***Luggage***

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Your luggage must be divided into two bags:

- A rucksack (35-40L or 45-50L) for use as a day bag. This will contain your (vital) personal belongings for the day (sweater, spare t-shirt, water bottle, picnic-lunch, sunglasses, small things ...)
- We use porters to transport our other belongings when trekking. Please bring a flexible travel bag with zips for easy access max 80L and max 13kg (16kg with camping gear). Please do not bring suitcases or other hard bags which the porters cannot transport.
- You may also be able to store some belongings securely at the hotel in Kathmandu.

To protect your bags, we will provide solid waterproof Altaï Bags.

## ***Medicine***

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Your guide is a trained first-aider and will carry a full first aid kit at all times during the trip in case of emergencies. We recommend that you bring a small personal first aid kit containing any medication you may need such as inhalers, plasters, antiseptic and painkillers.

## ***Passport***

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Your passport should be valid for at least six months after the last day of your stay. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific passport requirements and please be aware that proof of onwards travel may be required.

## ***Visa***

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It is your responsibility to confirm your specific visa requirements. Please bring valid passport photos with you to obtain a visa upon arrival.

To obtain trekking permits, your passport and photo ID is also required. Please provide us with good quality scans of your passport and 2 photos of identity.

For an individual visa, obtained on the spot as you arrive in Kathmandu, rates are as follows:

- 15 days : 25 US\$ + 1 picture
- 30 days : 40 US\$ + 1 picture
- 90 days : 100 US\$ + 1 picture

## ***Mandatory vaccines***

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No mandatory vaccinations are required. Recommended vaccines include Typhoid, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Rabies, Japanese Encephalitis, and Influenza.

## ***Health information & recommendations***

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It is your responsibility to check that your personal health insurance covers everything in this trip. A consultation with your doctor is a prerequisite for any trip and we advise you to visit your dentist too as untreated cavities have an annoying habit of waking up with altitude.

## Hygiene Recommendations

Water is not drinkable in Nepal. It is always possible to buy bottled water but in order to limit pollution and preserve natural areas, we strongly recommend that you drink purified water. For that, think to bring a water bottle of minimum 1.5 liters and purifying tablets (micropur, aquatabs ...). Consume only treated water or water which has been boiled for 30 minutes and then filtered. Be sure to wash your hands frequently, and definitely before each meal (anti-bacterial hand gel is recommended) and take care to disinfect any skin wounds. Avoid drinking natural drinks like pressed fruit juice and do not consume ice cream or "lassi" (a milk-based beverage) bought in the street. Meat and fish / shellfish should be well cooked before consumption.

## Weather

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From the eternal snows of high peaks to the tropical lowlands, Nepal has a wide variety of climates.

- **In autumn** (October to mid-December) the days are very beautiful but can be fresh at altitude. At 3000 m altitude, temperatures can drop to  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $14^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) at night.
- **In winter** (mid-december to mid-february): The nights are generally cold and the climate is dry. If night time temperatures drop easily below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $32^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) to 3000 m, the days are often sunny. Treks below 4000 m are very pleasant. There are very few tourists at this time.
- **In spring** (March to end of May): in this season, Kathmandu is in full bloom and the rhododendrons are magnificent. The weather is pleasant, it is getting hotter with some night storms. Temperatures vary between  $10$  and  $28^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $50$  -  $83^{\circ}\text{F}$ ), but can rise to over  $+30^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $+86^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). Between 2000 and 3000 m, temperatures rarely drop below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $32^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). A few rare frosts or snowfalls are possible in March from +4000 m.
- **In summer**: it is the monsoon season. This interrupts the majority of trekking from June until the end of September. However, certain regions of the "Trans-Himalayan" zone, Mustang and Dolpo remain sheltered from the monsoons - these are the only circuits available in Nepal in the summer.

## Electricity

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In recent years, due to a lack of hydropower facilities, electricity and water outages are becoming more frequent in Nepal, especially in Kathmandu (mainly in winter and spring). The hotels have generator but the electricity is limited. It is the same for the consumption of water.

## Local time

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Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)/ Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) +5.45. Daylight Saving Time (DST) is not observed here.

## Sustainable tourism

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As adventure and wilderness travel experts who run trips to some of the most remote parts of the world, we take responsible tourism very seriously. We respect the 'Leave No Trace' outdoor ethical

code and try to explore this beautiful location whilst causing minimal environmental damage.

Since the beginning, we have advocated for responsible tourism and the importance of equitable and sustainable principles. Harmonising these fundamentals ensures a fair distribution of economic benefits, improved working conditions for local teams and an increased awareness of the importance and practice of environmental protection. We hope that all of our clients will respect our philosophies and embrace these attitudes.

The Leave No Trace policy can be summarized in 7 simple steps which we hope you will follow during our trip...

1. Be prepared
2. Stick to trails and camp overnight right
3. Stash your trash and pick up waste
4. Leave it as you find it
5. Be careful with fire
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors

Over the years we have built up good relations with our local suppliers and we are keen to support local businesses as much as possible. We are a small company and we pay our local partners and suppliers directly insuring fair rates.

Our small group sizes not only provide a more intimate adventure but also cause less impact on the environment and local communities. We expect all who travel with us to support and uphold our Sustainable Tourism philosophies.