

# THE TEA GARDENS OF EAST NEPAL

This active adventure has been carefully designed for the whole family. We begin by exploring the mythical Nepalese capital city of Kathmandu with an expert cultural guide. Then, we discover the charming atmosphere of East Nepal; walk through tea fields, rice plantations and rural villages. We are invited to stay with local people in this remote mountainous region, an authentic area which remains untouched by tourism. We visit the lovely villages of Limbus, Rais and Brahmins and hike through the beautiful tea plantations of Ilam. We also drive up to Pauwa (2400m) where sweeping views of the towering Himalayan Mountains await. Discover a unique trip which enables for the whole family to go hiking in the Himalayas, to learn more about the fascinating history of this region and, to become immersed in authentic Nepalese culture...

 <b>Region</b>	Kanchenjunga & Makalu
 <b>Activity</b>	Family Trips Hiking & culture
 <b>Duration</b>	12 days
 <b>Group</b>	4 to 10 people
 <b>Code</b>	NEPESTF-EN
 <b>Price</b>	From €1,178
 <b>Level</b>	1/5
 <b>Comfort</b>	4/5
 <b>Language(s)</b>	English / French

# ITINERARY

## Day 1 Kathmandu

Welcome to Kathmandu! Your guide will greet you and escort you to your hotel. Depending on your arrival time, your trip leader can show you the old streets of Ason Tole and Indra Chowk and introduce you to the Nepalese way of living. Did you know that "Namaste" means "Hello" in Nepali? Enjoy an evening meal in a restaurant featuring some cultural performances.

*Accommodation: Hotel*

## Day 2 Swayambhunath & Patan

Today we visit the Nepalese capital, starting with the Buddhist Temple of Swayambhunath which overlooks the emerald valley of Kathmandu. It is also known as the "Monkey Temple" because cheeky monkeys from nearby forest come to "steal" offerings made to the Gods! We continue with the discovery of Patan, one of the three ancient imperial cities of the valley. It has been primarily Buddhist since the 3rd century BC and is known for its monasteries and colourful courtyards. Durbar Square of Patan, with its palace and Hindu pagodas is a UNESCO heritage site. We can enjoy lunch in a peaceful historic courtyard and explore the area before our late afternoon return to the hotel.

*Accommodation: Hotel*

## Day 3 Bodhnath - Nagarkot (2000m)

Short after breakfast transfer to Bodhnath. Here, we can see Buddhist monks praying and turning prayer wheels around the stupa. We can also visit a Thangka Painting School, where children can play with colours and do paintings with the help of a local painter. Then, we further drive up to a small village of Jahar Singh Pauwa. We can enjoy our picnic appreciating the Himalayas to the north: Mt. Langtang (7210m), Mt. Ganesh (7424m) and Mt. Dorje Lakpa (6900m). After lunch, we walk along a lovely flat trail towards Nagarkot. This evening, we can make a fire inside our Mountain Hotel and it's story time for kids! The classic Nepalese tale of "The Parrot" makes a great detime story to end a beautiful day.

*Overnight: Hotel Country Villa or MAP*

*Drive: 2 hours*

*Walk: 2 hours*

## Day 4 Nagarkot - Bhaktapur

Wake up to a beautiful sunrise over the Himalayas which becomes golden with the first rays of sunlight. A yoga specialist will join us to appreciate the view and run a yoga session focused on wellbeing and good health. After breakfast, we drive downhill to the village of Telkot, the starting point of our gentle hike to the village of Changunarayan. This settlement is home to the oldest temple of Nepal: The Changunarayan Temple (5th century). After a short visit to this monument, we drive to Bhaktapur for a picnic lunch in the historical Palace Area called Durbar Square. Today, we also have a meeting with a local Prajapati or 'potter' in his workshop, who helps the children make clay objects like piggy banks, birds and elephants. Later today, a treasure hunt in the historical centre of Bhaktapur is waiting for us.

*Overnight: Hotel Heritage or BB*

*Trek: 2 hours*

*Drive: 1 hour*

## Day 5 Katmandou to Jhapa

A spectacular road through a large mountainous region of Nepal leads to the East Terai of Nepal, at the border of India, near to Darjeeling. Let us take some time to discover the small villages scattered among the rice fields here. We walk from village to village and soak in the charming atmosphere of Terai where rice, palm trees and banana trees flourish.

*Accommodation: Homestay with dinner*

*Lunch: Picnic at Sunkoshi Riverbank*

*2 hours walk/discovery of villages in Terai*

Drive: 7 to 8 hours

📍 Day 6 **The People and Villages of Terai**

A full day dedicated to the discovery of the Terai Region: we hike through many authentic villages, share a tea with local people and enjoy the immersion in this unique Indo-Nepalese atmosphere. This evening, children can learn and play a traditional game called 'Carrom Board' with local children.

*Accommodation: Homestay with lunch & dinner*

*4 hours walking*

📍 Day 7 **Jhapa – Ilam**

After breakfast, we have a short drive and we discover the first tea plantations in Jhapa. We then leave the subtropical Terai region for the mountains and tea of Ilam, capital of Nepal tea for 150 years. Walking tour of tea plantations at Kanyam and we visit a factory to see the different stages of making tea. Late afternoon, we arrive at our hosts' home where we spend a pleasant evening.

*Accommodation: Homestay with dinner*

*Lunch: Picnic in the Tea Gardens*

*Trek: 3 hours*

*Drive: 2 hours*

📍 Day 8 **Ilam: Tea Gardens, people, villages**

Day of discovery of Ilam Region: the capital of Nepalese Tea. A beautiful hike through villages and wilderness allows us to discover beautiful landscapes but also meet local populations of the mountains of Eastern Nepal: Raïś, Limbus, Magars, Bhramanes...

*Overnight: Homestay with dinner*

*Lunch: Picnic in the Tea Gardens*

*Trek: 4 hours*

📍 Day 9 **Ilam - Pauwa - Jhapa**

Early this morning (after breakfast), we head back to the Pauwa Pass (2400m) to enjoy the Eastern Himalayan Mountain Range. From its heights, the views of our surroundings including Mt. Kanchanjangha (8586m) and Mt. Janu (7210m) are simply magical! En route, we can visit a dairy farm which uses a mixture of cow's and buffalo milk. and then we continue back to the friendly atmosphere of Terai. Afternoon, walk in the villages.

*Overnight: Homestay with dinner*

*Lunch: Local restaurant*

*Hike: 2 hours*

*Drive: 5 hours*

📍 Day 10 **Domestic flight Jhapa - Kathmandu**

After breakfast domestic flight to Kathmandu. This afternoon, we visit Bal Mandir School: this government-run school takes care of abandoned children and youth from disadvantaged families. We have the unique opportunity to spend some time with these children and interact with their care givers. Late afternoon return to our Hotel.

*Accommodation: Hotel*

📍 Day 11 **Free day in Kathmandu**

Enjoy a day at leisure in Kathmandu. Soak in the vibrant atmosphere, stroll through the old streets, visit museums or buy some postcards and souvenirs

*Accommodation: Hotel*

Day 12 **End of stay**

Transfer to the airport for your international flight.

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.

## DATES & PRICES

### **International departures:**

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No departure for now

### **Departures for French-speaking groups:**

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No departure for now

Trip code: NEPESTF-EN

### **Included**

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- All in-country transfers as detailed in itinerary
- Transport by private vehicle according to itinerary
- 3 \* hotel and B&B accommodation in Kathmandu (Hotel Tibet, Manaslu or similar)
- 2 \* hotel accommodation in Nagarkot / Bhaktapur (Hotel Himalayan Villa, Shiva Guest House or similar)
- Full board
- Accompaniment by an English speaking Altaï Guide
- Flights: Kathmandu - Bhadrapur - Katmandou
- Visits as per itinerary: with a cultural guide and a private vehicle
- Local permits

### **Not included**

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- Entrance to historical sites, monuments and museums
- Meals in Kathmandu & Kathmandu Valley
- Nepalese visa: US \$ 25 + photos
- International flights
- Insurance: Repatriation, Medical & Helicopter Services
- Drinks, tips and personal expenses

### **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 1/5**

This trip is perfect for travellers who enjoy gentle hikes and are interested in discovering historic sites and becoming immersed in Nepalese culture. Good hiking shoes and walking equipment are required.

### **Terms and conditions**

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#### **Inscription**

Booking a trip with Altaï Nepal 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.

#### **Facturation**

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. Altaï Nepal reserve the right to cancel your booking, free of charge, if this deadline is not respected.

#### **Annulation**

If for any reason you have to cancel your trip, Altaï Nepal require written confirmation of your decision. 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: a sum of €50 per person will be retained
- Cancellation received 30 to 21 days before the departure date: your deposit, 30% of the total trip price will be retained

- Cancellation received 20 to 14 days before the departure date: 50% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 13 to 7 days before the departure date: 75% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received less than 7 days before the departure date: 100% of the total trip price will be retained

#### **Special cases:**

Please note that, regardless of the date of cancellation or modification if you have agreed to pay for services such as hotel reservations, flights or additional activities, these services are usually non-refundable so additional fees may apply.

- Fixed airfares: if your airline ticket was issued in advance, often done to avoid significant surcharges, you will be charged 100% of any non-refundable fees if you wish to change or cancel your flight plan.
- Fixed in-country costs: early charges for firm bookings will be charged if you cancel or modify your trip.
- Insurance costs: if you have taken out comprehensive or cancellation insurance, the cost of insurance is due and cannot be refunded.

**Please note that fees apply according to the date Altaï Nepal receive your cancellation or modification request in writing.**

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 include those amounting to 'force majeure' in which case participants will receive a full refund but they will not be entitled to any compensation.

#### ***Modification du contrat***

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.

#### ***Prix et révision des prix***

The prices on our website are updated regularly and all of the prices we advertise are accurate when published. Altaï Nepal 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.

#### ***Cession du contrat***

If you are unable to travel with Altaï Nepal 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***

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**

This trip is led by a professional Nepali English-speaking Tour Leader, who is part of the Altai Nepal Team. Armed with an abundance of experience and a wealth of knowledge, our professional guides are all real experts.

### **Food**

#### **Lodge meals**

The dhal bhat (literally lentil-rice) is the basis of all meals here, this national dish is often enriched with vegetables and sometimes meat. It is a balanced dish, full of energy and nutritive intake, not fatty and above all, very digestible. You will have the chance to sample other delicacies like Mo:Mo, Chowmein, Roti (Nepali bread), Khir, Samosa, Sel Roti, etc.

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**

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.

### **Transportation**

Transport/transfers by private minibus & plane.

### **Budget & exchange**

**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**

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**

- 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 with vibram soles - trails can be rocky and muddy
- 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)

## ***Helpful equipment***

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- 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
- A notebook or travel journal

## ***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 ... )
- A larger bag (60-80L) containing the rest of your belongings, which can be safely stored in Kathmandu.

## ***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. 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, aqua tabs ...). 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 °C (14°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 °C (31°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 °C (50 - 83°F), but can rise to over +30 °C (+86°F). Between 2000 and 3000 m, temperatures rarely drop below 0 °C (32°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.