



The Responsible Travellers

www.theresponsibletravellers.com

Classic Himalaya: Annapurna Sanctuary Trek Trip Notes



Highlights:

- Sightseeing to UNESCO sites in Ktm valley
- 10 nights teahouse trek
- 4 Nights B&B Hotel
- Average daily walking 5-6 hours
- Internal Flight Pokhara - KTM

Grade B+ 15 days

This is graded "B+" as it includes:

- Well defined trails
- Good underfoot conditions
- Undulating route with a number of climbs
- Maximum Altitude 4095m

Introduction

The Annapurna Sanctuary is one of Nepal's classic walks, on which you enter into the very heart of the mountains. The lower reaches of the trek take you through beautiful traditional villages where you can get a taste of typical rural life. As our itineraries are planned to gain the best acclimatisation, we take a westerly route up to Ghorepani. From here we will make an early start for sunrise at a fabulous viewing station Poon Hill, before walking up and across a ridge taking us east to the main trail which then heads north to the Base Camps of Annapurna and Machhapuchhre. We then ascend beyond the cultivated fields into the upland areas and begin to become surrounded by the Himalaya. At our ultimate destination – "The Sanctuary"; locally known as the "Abode of the Gods", we are in a natural amphitheatre and the only decision you will have is which way to look!

On the flight from Pokhara you will be able to see the mountain peaks, this time from a bird's eye view. In Kathmandu you will have a chance to see the finest Newari architecture in the East, experience the hustle and bustle of the medieval type markets, explore the cobbled streets and temple complexes.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu

Arrive in Kathmandu (5hrs 45mins ahead of GMT winter time, 4 hrs 45 mins ahead of GMT in the summer). Transfer to the hotel from the airport. Evening will be spent settling in and relaxing in the hotel, group dinner will be arranged in a restaurant in the evening. Accommodation: City Hotel Bed & Breakfast

Day 2: Kathmandu Sightseeing

This morning there will be a full trip briefing by the leader. Today then incorporates a guided sightseeing tour of two of Kathmandu's major sights. Our first destination is the country's most important Hindu temple- Pashupatinath. The temple is situated on the banks of the Bagmati River in the outskirts of the city. The cobbled streets are bustling with ladies selling flowers, incense and other offerings, and colourful Sadhus (holy men) roaming the surrounds of the temple. Pashupati, lord of the animals is a manifestation of Shiva and is believed to still roam the forests in the form of a deer. The temple dating back many hundreds of years makes it one of the most important Shiva locations across the Indian sub continent. As well as a place of worship, it is also the most important cremation site for the Hindus in Nepal. Our second visit takes us to Boudha - a Buddhist monument and the largest of its kind. As you wander round the shops surrounding the stupa, you will find yourself mingling with monks in their maroon and saffron robes, and traditionally dressed Tibetan refugees who live here – the religious center for Himalayan Buddhists. You can join the locals to circumambulate the stupa, bargain for artifacts in the shops or sit on a rooftop restaurant and absorb the atmosphere. Accommodation: City Hotel Bed & Breakfast



Day 3: Kathmandu to Birethanti

We leave early this morning on a very scenic drive to Pokhara. Leaving Kathmandu, we drive westward over a small pass at Thankot. As we start to descend there is good view of the Ganesh Himals, the Manaslu Range and even the Annapurnas on a clear day. The road winds down hugging the mountain side to the terraced fields then following the Mahesh River we come to the Trishuli River which we follow all the way to Mugling where it confluences with the Marshyangdi River. Here we cross the bridge and head west now following the Marshyangdi. The journey provides plenty of opportunity to view typical rural life amidst cultivated terraced fields. We can break for lunch at Damauli or Pokhara then continue on for another hour and a half going over a pass at Lumle to Naya Pul. A short 30 minutes walk from here will bring us to Birethanti situated on the confluence of the Modi and Burundi Khola. This will be our home for the night. Accommodation: Mountain Lodge





Day 4: Birethanti to Ulleri

It is a pleasant walk in the morning following the Burundi River we climb very gently to Tirkhedunga, a great place to stop for lunch. If you are a keen birdwatcher, there is good chance of spotting different kinds of redstarts, three varieties of kingfishers, dippers, forktails along the river, and magpies, treepies, parakeets, tits, many kinds of warblers, barbets around the cultivated areas. We cross the bridge after lunch and climb steadily up stone staircase through neatly terraced hillsides to Ulleri. There is nice view of Annapurna South and Hiu Chuli from here.

Walking time – 4 ½ to 5hrs

Final altitude – 2073m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

Day 5: Ulleri to Ghorapani

We carry on climbing and the terraces gradually fade away to give way to lush mossy forest of rhododendron. At a clearing called Nangethanti we stop for lunch and then continue climbing in the afternoon through the forest, steeply at times until a stone staircase leads up to Ghorepani on the col. Tremendous views from here we see, on the left the Dhaulagiri Range (Dhaulagiri I – 8167m) and then the Annapurna Range (Annapurna I – 8091m).

Ghorepani means horse watering place. Traditionally this point used to be a main resting place on the trade route between Pokhara and the prosperous Kali Gandaki Valley leading up to Mustang, today it is a junction of several trekking routes and enjoys a good economy. There are stalls along the trails selling souvenirs.

Walking time – 5 hrs, Final altitude – 2855m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

Day 6: Ghorapani to Tadopani

Today will be a very early start for those opting to walk up to Poon Hill for sunrise. The climb is about forty five minutes and is best done before dawn to allow enough time to arrive there on time to witness the magical moment. It is an amazing experience watching daybreak over the mountains, waiting for the first ray of sun to kiss the mountain tops, whilst the world below is just awakening. This is one of the best mountain vistas and is well worth the effort. After breakfast we climb out of Ghorepani up Gurung Hill that again provides fantastic views. After a little while of undulation on the ridge we begin descending gently to begin with to Deurali, then steeply down a narrow gully following the river to Banthanti. The trail now contours through the forest for a while then at a lone tea house we descend steeply to the river and then climb for approximately thirty minutes to Tadapani. From here we have great views of Annapurna South (7219m), Huinchuli and Machhapuchhre (Fishtail 6993m).

Walking time – 5 hrs, Final altitude – 2700m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge



Day 7: Tadopani to Chomrong

After yet another fabulous sunrise we begin the day's walk by descending down into the forest. The forest is teeming with birdlife usually this time of the day. Laughing thrush of at least two varieties are a common sighting. Emerging from the forest we pass a teahouse and a few houses and continue descending past another lodge before crossing the bridge on the Kyumnu Khola. We climb steeply from here up to the school and the village of Gurjung, a good place for lunch. Reinvigorated after a rest and food we continue climbing for about an hour and a half, then followed by a short descent the trail winds over terraces to Chomrong. Proper Chomrong where we will stop is about fifteen minutes further from the first lodges. Today Machhapuchhre is true to its nickname as you see the twin peaks shaped just like a fish tail.

Walking time – 4 ½ - 5hrs, Final altitude – 2170m, Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

Day 8: Chomrong to Dhoban

In the morning the trail descends from here on a stone staircase to the Chomrong Khola then crossing the bridge we climb steeply up to Sinuwa. After a short break and past the houses of Sinua the trail climbs steadily through the dense forest up to a small waterfall. There is good chance of spotting common langur monkeys this morning. After a short undulation the trail steeply descends down a stone staircase to Bamboo. The vegetation is now a mix of rhododendron and bamboo. We continue walking from here for another hour less steeply to Dhoban. We are now close approaching the Sanctuary, which was first christened as such by Lt. Col Jimmy Roberts on his 1956 expedition to the Annapurnas.

Walking time – 5hrs, Final altitude – 2540m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge



Day 9: Dhoban to Machhapuchre Base Camp

Leaving Dhoban we continue to ascend gently to begin with, then steeply through the forest to arrive at Himalaya Hotel after about an hour and a half. The trail continues to climb past here mainly through bamboo thickets to Hinku Cave which is just a huge boulder that provides shelter at the top of a flight of stone steps. We cross a small river after a small descent and then climb up to Deurali just past the stream from the two waterfalls above. After lunch we climb out of Deurali. We cross the small bridge on the Modi Khola and continue climbing up the broad and boulder strewn glacial valley. There is good view through the gap looking east of Machapuchhare that looks very different now as vegetation is sparse of mainly upland rhododendron. As we cross the river once again we then follow it for a while before we begin to

climb up to MBC. Leaving the river the trail ascends steadily towards the moraine ridge ahead on the left side of the valley behind which the lodges are situated. There is often a lot of snow on this section early in the Spring season.

Walking time – 5 hrs, Final altitude – 3788m, Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

Day 10: Machhapuchre Base Camp to Annapurna Base Camp

Today is a short day of about two hours to Annapurna Base Camp. The trail climbs steadily up the gully between the moraine ridge of Annapurna Glacier and Hiunchuli Peak with a fantastic view of Annapurna South and Bahra Shikhar ahead and Machapuchhare looking back. At ABC you can walk to the cairns at the edge of the moraine, and walk along this ridge for good views of A1 and the glacier. The rest of the day can be spent relaxing and enjoying the view. Provided its clear in the evening, sunset is great on Machapuchhare.

Walking time – 2 hrs, Final altitude – 4095m, Accommodation: Mountain Lodge



Day 11: Annapurna Base Camp to Bamboo

Leaving the Sanctuary we retrace our steps past MBC, Hinku Cave, Dhoban and further down into the bamboo thickets to the aptly named Bamboo Hotel.

Walking time – 6 to 6 ½ hrs

Final altitude – 2310m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

Day 12: Bamboo to Jinnu Danda

We walk down to Chomrong for lunch, then at the end of the village we descend steeply through terraced hillside to Jinnu Danda. There is a hot spring twenty minutes down from the lodges where you could soak your muscles later in the afternoon.

Walking time – 5 hrs

Final altitude – 1780m

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

Day 13: Jinnu Danda to Pokhara

We descend further down to cross the bridge over Kyumnu Khola and climb for about 10 minutes until we are following the Modi Khola once again. The trail undulates along the river for the rest of the day to Nayapul where our transport will be waiting to drive us back to Pokhara.

Walking time – 6 ½ hrs

Accommodation: City Hotel Bed & Breakfast



Day 14: Flight to Kathmandu

In the morning we take an internal flight to Kathmandu. Weather permitting this should be a spectacular journey with a bird's eye view of the Himalaya from Dhalaugiri in the west, across the Annapurnas, Manaslu, Ganesh Himal and finally Langtang. You arrive at the hotel to enjoy the luxury of a fresh change of clothes! Accommodation: City Hotel Bed & Breakfast

Day 15: Depart Kathmandu

Today we will transfer you from the hotel for your international departure at the airport. Your sense of achievement after trekking to the Annapurna Sanctuary, and the culture you will have witnessed along the way will be a fabulous experience. However, the best memory will surely be that as a result of your holiday the Nepali community will benefit from development projects through our affiliated charities.

Recommended Extensions

We suggest the following extensions which can be added to the end of this itinerary:

- i) 2 days chitwan Safari ii) 2 day Spa Resort

Independent & Bespoke Group Trips

This trip can be tailor made for either an independent trek or for your own group.

You can select any departure date and adjust the itinerary if necessary to suit your needs.

please contact us at:

info@theresponsibletravellers.com



To book e-mail: info@theresponsibletravellers.com

Additional Information

What's included in your holiday?

- ✓ Professional Group Leader
- ✓ Carbon Balancing of international flights
- ✓ 4 nights hotel B&B accommodation
- ✓ 10 nights teahouse trek accommodation
- ✓ 1 day guided sightseeing, transport and entrance fees in and around Ktm as specified in the itinerary
- ✓ All transportation included in the itinerary
- ✓ Portage and guides fees
- ✓ National Park Entrance fees & permits
- ✓ 100% profits donated to charity

What's not included:

- ❖ International flights & airport taxes
- ❖ All Meals not included in the itinerary
- ❖ Incidental extra personal expenses
- ❖ Nepal Tourist Entry Visa
- ❖ Single persons supplement
- ❖ Additional sightseeing not specified in the itinerary
- ❖ Travel Insurance
- ❖ Staff tips

Travelling alone.....and don't want to pay a single supplement? No problem, you will be paired up with someone of the same gender to share a room. If you would prefer the privacy of a single occupancy the Single Supplement for this trip is £105. Please note that single rooms in the mountain lodges will be dependant on availability and **can not** be guaranteed. We will do our utmost to meet your needs.

Thought of Funding raising for charity?

- You may choose to take this opportunity to raise sponsorship for one of our affiliated charities, If you wish to do so please contact us at: info@theresponsibletravellers.com and we will forward details to you.

First class staff & service levels

We are a highly credible tour operating organisation specialising in the Himalayan countries. All our staff are specially selected based on their experience, expertise and qualifications. We pride ourselves on a highly personalised airport to airport service with quality of care. The trip Leader will be an experienced professional leader working full time in the Himalayas & Central Asia with many years of experience. He/she will have full mountain wilderness & first aid qualifications and will have received training from either Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Nepal Mountaineering Association or one of the European Alpine Clubs. As a responsible employer we pride ourselves on hiring local staff and paying wages higher than most organisations. If you want to read more about our employment policy please go to:

www.theresponsibletravellers.com/our_ethics/employment_policy.html

Further Information:

If you have any queries regarding this trip, whether it is about preparation, the itinerary or general travel information please do not hesitate to contact us. If this trip is not for you perhaps you would like to contact us for details of alternative trips. All our trips and additional extensions can be viewed online at: www.theresponsibletravellers.com or write to us at info@theresponsibletravellers.com.

Administration & Practicalities

Insurance: It is compulsory to take full holiday insurance which covers trekking to the maximum altitude of your trek/trip, and also covers full rescue and repatriation costs. You will need to provide a copy of your insurance details, including an emergency 24 hour telephone number to the trek leader before departing Leh. This should include any correspondence stating clarification of the required cover. If your policy documents are not available or prove to provide insufficient cover you may not be able to continue your trip. Please ensure that your policy also covers any extra activity outside of the stated itinerary you wish to do if you are extending your trip.

Passport: Passports need to be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of visa application if you are applying in the UK and from the date of entry into Nepal.

Visa Details: Visas are available in advance from the Nepal Embassy online at:

http://www.nepembassy.org.uk/visa_information.html

You can also have the visa processed at Kathmandu airport. If you intend to wait until your arrival at the airport please remember to bring two passport photos and US\$40 dollars in cash (N.B US dollars - is the only accepted payment).

Money: The local currency is Nepali Rupees (approx exchange rate 120 NRS - £1 - subject to daily fluctuation) Please note this can not be purchased in the UK. It is advised to take either sterling or US Dollars. Traveller's cheques and cash can be exchanged for local currency in Kathmandu. Credit cards are not generally accepted. In Kathmandu there are ATMs available to access cash via Cirrus / MasterCard / Visa.

Flight Information: This trip is land only and operates Ktm to Ktm. Please contact us if you want advice about international flight options and how to purchase.

Health: It is important you are prepared & fit and healthy for your trek. We strongly recommend you visit your local GP and ask advice regarding any vaccinations required.

Itinerary: All that is possible will be done to ensure the trip follows the outlined itinerary. However, due to factors beyond our control such as local weather, politics and airlines it may be necessary to vary one or more of the days. If this does occur we shall do our utmost to ensure minimal impact to you.

What to expect

Weather

October to April is the dry season. During this time you should have warm days with temperatures between 15 - 25 degrees Celsius depending on altitude with relatively clear skies and little precipitation. During the winter months temperatures may reduce to -15 degrees Celsius during night-time at higher altitudes.

Group Size

Due to the remote locations that are visited, we remain sympathetic to the local culture and environment by limiting our trips to a maximum of 12 places. This may be slightly smaller than other operators, and we believe it ensures the maximum enjoyment and fulfilment of our trip members and minimize the pressures on the environment. This also avoids the feeling of "herding" from being part of a large group. There is a minimum of 6 to operate the trek.

Wildlife

You are likely to get sightings of the Himalayan birds of prey such as Griffin vultures and lammergeiers. The forest areas are home to Langur and Macque monkey's and many varieties of bird. If you travel in the autumn the landscape is a myriad of colours and in spring the Rhododendrons & Magnolia are in blossom.

Baggage:

You should use a Rucksack or Kit bag that is strong enough to withstand the rigors of transportation in the mountains. Suitcases or rigid bags can not be used as these are a difficult and awkward load for porters. The weight limit for your trek bag is 12.5kg. The limitation for luggage on the internal flight is 15kg for the hold and 10kg for hand luggage. Please see your airline for details of your international flight luggage allowances.

More about us & Our Ethics.....

Here at **The Responsible Travellers** we take great pride in the fact that we are **doing the right thing** by you our customers, by our staff, and by the people, country and environment in which we operate.

We believe actions speak louder than words, over the next few pages you can read how our ethics are put into practice.



Our Guarantee:

100% of profits are donated to Charitable Projects

- ✓ We pay the cost to Carbon Balance your international flight to the Himalayas
- ✓ Through a committed Environmental Policy we work to ensure minimal impact of our activities
- ✓ We have a simple and fair Pricing Policy with no extra fees charges – price us up against other companies!
- ✓ Have a fair and ethical Employment Policy which is committed to employing local staff and paying fair wages

Are you ready for a change in the way you approach your holiday?

Before you go.... we start to take responsibility for your trip by carbon balancing your flights.



The impact on climate change from the way in which we live today is a topic we have all heard about, and is under much debate from the world's scientific community. This is something that we can not and should not ignore. This is why when you go on holiday with "The Responsible Travellers", we commit as part of our Responsible Tourism policy to ensure your trip contributes towards renewable energy technologies in the Himalayas. Given the great "green debate", we have chosen to implement this policy in a way that ensures we know we are making a difference. For every traveller to the Himalayas we donate twice the amount it costs to purchase commercial carbon credits** to either Nepal's Renewable Energy support programme BSP. Or Ladakh's Ecological Development Society depending on your destination. Travel with peace of mind with **The Responsible Travellers**

Whilst you are there.... Our Employment and environmental policies demonstrate our continued sense of responsibility. Firstly, our belief in aid through trade and therefore the generation of local employment and how this is managed is at the very heart of our operation. This is why we have a 100% commitment to employing only local staff. Our customers benefit from this by being able to get closer to the culture and learn more from the experience in the Himalayas, travelling with those who are born and bred in the area. By employing this policy we are also ensuring that the local economy benefits as much as possible rather than commercial organisations. We take great pride in ensuring fair wages to all our local staff and protecting our porters from exploitation. Secondly, our environmental policy addresses waste management, water usage, and encourages and supports the use of renewable resources. In addition, we work closely with the Nepal Sustainable Tourism Development Unit and WWF to ensure the strongest commitment to the local environment. Read more at: www.theresponsibletravellers/ethics.html



The choice is easy when you are...

After you've gone..... The Responsible Travellers donates all profits from its travel operations to charitable projects in Nepal. We believe the most effective way to invest is with the help of specialist organisations. We work with our partners to find suitable projects and locations to invest and then all the funds go directly to the local project. Our partner charities and areas of investment include:



Education

We believe all development starts with educating the people. We support community education programmes, child support programmes, and interest free loans for adult education through our beneficiary charity CHANCE Registered UK charity. 1107201..



Community Development

We help communities to provide themselves with improved facilities and encourage this to be done in an environmentally friendly way. Our volunteer programs allow visitors to experience this first hand when they opt for a family home stay and participate in the community project holidays.



Re-Forestation & Renewable Resources

Our third area of work involves working with BSP – the national biogas organisation in Nepal. The WWF estimate that only 29% of the original forest covers in Nepal still remains. Between 1990 and 2005, Nepal lost 1.2 million hectares of forest We work with BSP Nepal in order to help the communities develop Biogas – a renewable energy resource which provides clean fuel, stops deforestation, and offers far reaching health and sanitation benefits.



*To see more details of our charitable giving please go online to:
<http://www.theresponsibletravellers.com/ethics/projects.html>*

Our commitment to **Doing the Right Thing** extends from investing in local charitable projects, to making sure that our customers also get a good deal.

To help you have a hassle free holiday, we provide a fair and simple **pricing policy**:

- ✓ We charge a fair price: to make sure the holiday is as satisfying as possible; we charge what we believe is a fair price, not what we can get away with – compare us to other companies!
- ✓ No extra land charges or hidden fees: To keep life simple we make a single charge
- ✓ No profiteering from single supplements: we charge a fair price based on cost & do not charge excessive premiums for single supplements
- ✓ No nagging for donations: We do not request charitable donations from you in order to justify our responsible tourism policy. We work hard on your behalf so you can just concentrate on having a great time!

....Doing the right thing