

The Responsible Travellers



The Responsible Travellers is a non commercial organisation specialising in travel within the Himalaya. The company's primary objective is to encourage travel to this remote area of the world and thereby generate "aid through trade" and income for charitable projects which support environmental and educational development in Nepal. We can therefore offer our clients a rare and unique opportunity to visit this spectacular Himalayan Kingdom knowing that all profits generated will be invested in local charitable projects. Whether it is trekking amongst the splendid mountain peaks, an elephant safari in the jungle or an enriching cultural experience, Nepal is the ultimate travel destination, and **The Responsible Travellers** are the very essence of responsible & ethical tourism. As well as the scheduled departures, we specialise in offering tailor made holidays and experiences. These may be independent trips, charity or corporate challenge events, bespoke groups, school field trips or gap year experiences

Our Ethics:

When you travel with **The Responsible Travellers** you benefit and so does the local community:

- ✓ We are a non commercial organisation donating 100% of profits to Charitable Projects.
- ✓ We will pay the cost to Carbon Balance your international flights
- ✓ Through a committed Environmental Policy we work to ensure minimal impact of our activities
- ✓ Our fair and simple Pricing Policy has no extra fees or land charges – price us up against other companies!
- ✓ We have a fair and ethical Employment Policy which is committed to employing local staff and paying fair wages

Our People:

You can also depend on our experience and professional expertise. Our Directors have a combination of Travel Industry, Charity and Global Corporate backgrounds. We are able to combine these skills to create a highly professional and experienced team. Equally, we take our responsibilities seriously when looking after you in the mountains. The trekking staffs have all been working in the industry for between 7 to 15+ years. Our Group Leaders attend professional trainings for Mountain Leadership and Mountain Safety & first aid training provided by KEEP (Kathmandu Environmental Education Project is a registered non-governmental organization, working to support sustainable tourism in Nepal). We pride ourselves on paying wages higher than commercial organisations and limit the loads that our porter staffs carry. Equally the assistant Sherpa staffs receive training in English language and eco-trekking. You can read more about our employment policies and relationships with KEEP and other charities on the website: at www.theresponsibletravellers.com and click on Our Ethics.

Wild West Adventure Tour Trip Notes

Highlights:

Mountain & Adventure

Annapurnas
Machhapuchhre
White Water Rafting
2 day Trek

Culture

Swayumbhu
Durbar Square
Tansen Hill Town
Buddha's Birthplace

Nature

Rhino
Crocodile
Elephant
Monkeys

Searching for Bengal Tiger, trekking in the foothills of the Annapurna, visiting the birthplace of Lord Buddha and seeing the timeless medieval town of Tansen, this tour takes you on a journey to experience a mixture of cultural and natural sanctuaries of Nepal. This is truly an adventure trip taking you off the beaten track and discovering some of the less visited areas of Nepal and therefore more authentic culture is retained. We start in Kathmandu to see some of the most holy Hindu and Buddhist sights before leaving the Kathmandu Valley and heading towards the West. The trip also combines an opportunity to get the adrenaline running as we raft on the Trishuli River.

After this aquatic excursion we drive to Pokhara, the second city of Nepal for splendid mountain views whilst trekking for two days in the foothills of the Annapurna range of the Himalaya; before arriving at Tansen – a remote and less visited ancient hill town. Our second cultural destination takes us to Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha where we visit the pilgrimage sites and take a walk in the Sarus Crane sanctuary where we can also spot blue bull or Nilgai as they are known locally.

Finally, we arrive in Bardia National Park, home to the Royal Bengal Tiger, and one horned Rhino amongst many other birds and mammals. Here we spend three days enjoying jungle activities before taking a spectacular flight along the Himalaya ranges back to Kathmandu. The trip also allows you to experience a wide range of Nepali accommodation, from a Palace Hotel, to River Camps, mountain and safari Lodges.

We believe our exclusive itinerary offers you an unforgettable off the beaten track experience in Nepal.

Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu

Arrive in Kathmandu (5hrs 45mins ahead of GMT winter time).

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

Meals: None

Day 2: Kathmandu

This morning there will be a full trip briefing by your Leader.

The day then incorporates a guided sightseeing tour to two of Kathmandu's major sights.

Our first destination is one of the country's most important temples – Swayambhunath popularly known as the monkey temple due to the large population of monkey resident here. Believed to be self created thousands of years ago, the temple is a very large whitewashed dome with a gilded spire top by a parasol and is surrounded by a complex of smaller temples. It sits atop a hill and thus can be seen from many miles away. The balcony here provides a good view overlooking the valley and the mountains in the north. A good part of the morning will be spent here enjoying the view and mingling amongst the pilgrims who come here to worship in the various temples.

Our second visit will take us to Kathmandu Durbar Square. The old palace stands here amidst a complex of temples dating back to the 17th Century. However, the Kasthamandap, a building which supposedly had been built from a single Sal tree and given Kathmandu its name, is thought to date back to the 12th century. Some of the major highlights in the Square are the Taleju Temple standing tallest to the north of

the palace, Kumari Bahal – home to the Living Goddess “Kumari”, Kala Bhairav is the most fearsome aspect of Lord Shiva depicted on a huge slab of stone. From the window of the Shiva and Parvati temple the image of the divine couple benignly looks down upon their subjects. After the tour you can walk amongst the back streets of Thamel enjoying the shops and bazaar atmosphere.

Accommodation: City Hotel

Food Included: Breakfast.

Day 3 : Rafting & River Camp

After an early breakfast we leave the hotel and drive westward over a small pass at Thankot. There should be great views of the Manaslu Range, the Ganesh, Langtang and even the Annapurna as we start descending steeply down on hairpin bends to the Trishuli Valley. After about two and a half hour of driving we will arrive at our put in point to commence on our trip with a good bit of white water rafting down the Trishuli River. The river has low graded rapids, and is thus is very good for beginners as well as those with rafting experience. Good and exciting rapids interspersed with calm stretches will allow you to enjoy the scenery and the birdlife. Look out for some Himalayan exotics like the white capped and plumbious redstarts, different varieties of forktail, kingfishers at least two types, wallcreeper.... Tonight's accommodation will be a camp on the beach with two man tents on twin sharing. The afternoon can be spent with a walk to a typical hill village nearby.

Accommodation: River Camp

Food Included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Day 4: Rafting & Pokhara

After breakfast we will get back on the rafts and paddle down the river with more exciting rapids before finishing at Mugling, Here our bus should be waiting to drive us to Pokhara. At Mugling there is the confluence of the Trishuli River with the Marshangdi River which then become the Narayani River. We cross the bridge here and follow the Marshyandi and head west past Khaireni and the hydro dam, then at Dumre we leave the river and drive through small valleys and villages enjoying the views and absorbing the rural life of Nepal. At Damauli we cross the bridge over the Madi River and continue through terraces of paddy fields until as we emerge from the Seti gorge and be greeted by the Annapurnas dominating the skyline.

Pokhara is the second city of Nepal with a beautiful lakeside setting below the mountains; this is a relaxing and attractive place to visit. You can spend the evening exploring the lakeside shops and having refreshments overlooking the water.

Accommodation: City Hotel

Food Included: Breakfast.

Day 5: Trek in the Annapurna Foothills

We drive about 45 minutes westward out of Pokhara to Khare from where we start our walk for the day. This will take us through lush forest of conifer and rhododendron up to a clearing with good view of the lake before we delve into the forest once again to finally emerge at Dhampus village set amongst terraced fields. The view is even more extraordinary and spectacular from here of the Machhapuchhre and the Annapurnas and the Manaslu far out in the distance. We stay the night in a small local lodge, providing a taste of the Himalayan trekking and life in the mountains. The views and experience will make this a night to remember.

Accommodation: Mountain Lodge

Food Included: Breakfast.

Day 6: Trek & Drive to Tansen

After a beautiful sunrise and breakfast enjoying the fabulous mountain views, we walk down from Dhampus past the lower villages amongst beautiful terraced fields and a small forested area to Phedi. From here we are transferred back to Pokhara for lunch at the lakeside restaurant, and some free-time for visiting the shops.

The afternoon will be spent driving on a scenic route to Tansen Hill Town south of Pokhara.

Accommodation: Town Guesthouse

Food Included: None

Day 7: Tansen Hill Town

This is an historic town that has been the strategic location separating the southern plains from the hills. It was an important trading town along a pilgrim route between north and south pilgrimage sites. Once, capital of the old Palpa Kingdom, before the unification of Nepal, the Sen dynasty of Tansen joined with the Gorkhas to defeat their neighbouring Kingdoms in the west of Nepal. The ruling monarch after unification in the 18th century was an arranged marriage of the Gorkha King to a daughter of the Sen families, hence the continued historic importance of this remote hill town. This town has old Newari houses and cobbled streets, which is a fine example of this era of architecture. The town is famous for the production of Dhaka, a woven material used to make the traditional Nepali hats for men, or "Topis", as well as metalware products. We shall spend the day having an historic tour around the temples, squares and the bazaar, and an optional walk out of the town for those more energetic.

Accommodation: Guesthouse

Food Included: None

Day 8: Lumbini – birthplace of Lord Buddha

This morning we drive to Lumbini, the small village that was the birthplace of Lord Buddha. The drive will be approximately, 3 hours, after which we shall have lunch in the hotel at Lumbini.

In the 6th century BC, Prince Siddhartha was born, and later became known as Gautam Buddha, the "Enlightened One". He is the founder of the Buddhist faith, which is based upon his teachings of the four noble truths. He said that all suffering of humans could be rid if we lived our life with the right thoughts, actions and intentions. Our afternoon will be spent visiting the pilgrimage sites including the Maya Devi Temple which houses the exact location of his birthplace, the monastic complex, which is home to many Monasteries and Stupas, and finally the eternal world peace flame.

Accommodation: Hotel

Food Included: Breakfast

Day 9: Crane Sanctuary & Bardia National Park

This morning we shall visit the World Peace Pagoda at the opposite side to the pilgrim complex.

This is also surrounded by the crane sanctuary, and so we shall take a short walk into this dedicated area to look for the Sarus Cranes and resident Nilgai which also live in the area.

After our wildlife introduction, we shall then drive to Bardia National Park for the final part of the trip which is dedicated to nature safaris. Tonight we shall rest at the Safari Lodge that will become home for the next few days.

Accommodation: Safari Lodge

Food Included: Breakfast

Day 10/11/12: Bardia National Park

Over the next three days we shall be resident at Bardia, which is the largest and most undisturbed area in the Terai. The park is covered with sal forest and grasslands which are bordered by the great waters of the Karnali River to the west, and the Churia Range of hills to the north. It has the largest population of Royal Bengal Tiger in Nepal, and is also home to the endangered one horned Rhino, garial crocodile, otter, langur monkeys, 5 species of deer, asian elephants, and the rare gangetic dolphin, as well as over 250 species of bird including tropical, water and birds of prey.

Our activities over the next few days will include: elephant back safari, jungle walk, jungle jeep ride to the blackbuck area, and rafting on the Karnali tributaries to view animal and bird life.

Accommodation: Safari Lodge

Food Included: full board

Day 13: Internal Flight to Kathmandu

This morning we drive to Nepalganj, the headquarters of the western region of Nepal to fly back to Kathmandu. Weather permitting this flight offers a fantastic opportunity to see a broad sweep of the Himalaya as we traverse from Dhaulagiri to the Annapurna range, the Ganesh Himal and Manaslu finally seeing the Langtang. This internal flight will be a great experience.

In the evening the group can meet for dinner in Kathmandu to celebrate the final night together.

Accommodation: Hotel

Food Included: Breakfast

Day 14: Depart for the UK

This will be undeniably a journey like no other into the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal. The nature and culture you will have experienced along the way, we hope will have been 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.

Should you wish to extend your stay in Nepal please review the optional extra excursions online at www.theresponsibletravellers.com and go to our destinations and click on extensions.

Additional Information

Please note costs include:

- Carbon balancing for international flight to Kathmandu
- 5 nights city hotel bed & breakfast accommodation
- 1 night river camp
- 1 night mountain lodge
- 2 nights Guesthouse
- 4 nights safari resort full board
- Guided sightseeing, transport and entrance fees in Kathmandu, Tansen, Lumbini and Bardia National Park as specified in the itinerary
- All transportation included in the itinerary whilst in Nepal
- Internal flight from Nepalganj to Kathmandu
- National Park Entrance fees
- Charity donation

Not included:

- International flights & airport taxes to Kathmandu (international airport departure tax – approx £15)
- 1 Breakfast, 8 lunches, 8 dinners
- Incidental extra personal expenses
- Staff tips
- Nepal Tourist Entry Visa (\$30)
- Single persons room supplement
- Additional sightseeing not specified in the itinerary
- Travel Insurance - mandatory

Single Person Supplement: the costs are based on two people sharing a twin room. Should you require a single room a supplement of £195 will be levied. Please note a single room can not be guaranteed in the mountain lodge and will be dependant on availability. We will however, do our utmost to respond to your requirements.

Flight Information: Our trips are land only and operate Kathmandu to Kathmandu (please see trip notes for specific details). Given our clients come from a variety of locations around the world we are able to help you source flights but we do not purchase on your behalf. We also prefer to give you the option to add extensions or create a tailor made trip and therefore have the flexibility of flights at your own convenience. Please contact us if you want advise about flight options and how to purchase.

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 Kathmandu. 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 for approx. £20. A link to the website is below:

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\$30 dollars in cash (N.B US dollars - is the only accepted payment).

Vaccinations: We strongly recommend you to take advice from your local GP travel clinic regarding required vaccinations.

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 cards.

Baggage, Equipment Hire & Purchase : If trekking 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 and pack animals. If you are taking an internal flight 15kgs is the limitation for luggage on this flight including day sack. As a responsible employer we have a strict policy to limit the porter loads. Please help us to maintain standards by restricting your kit bag to 12.5kg.

Many items are available in Kathmandu for purchase at lower cost than in the UK e.g. sleeping bag liners, trekking trousers, down jackets & sleeping bags. Please contact us at least 1 month before departure with any queries regarding kit hires or purchases you may wish to make.

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.

Staff: All staff are specially selected and hired locally, the trek Leader will be an experienced professional leader working full time in the Himalayas & Central Asia. As a responsible employer we pride ourselves on paying wages higher than commercial organisations. We also have high standards limiting the loads our porters carry.

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 by giving the opportunity to absorb the local culture more easily. This also avoids the feeling of "herding" from being part of a large group. There is a minimum of 6 to operate the trek.

Preparation and Training: In order to get the best from your holiday you may need to do some training, or other preparation. Remember you will be travelling to the Himalayas, this is a remote destination where the way of life is very different. You should be prepared for facilities and services appropriate for the local conditions and not equivalent to Western standards.

Sponsorship: 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.

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, or by post at PO Box 20878, Kathmandu, Nepal.

More about our charity work.....

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 page you can read how our ethics are put into practice.

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. We work to calculate the carbon emissions generated from your flights, and invest in both reforestation and renewable energy resources in order to offset the carbon emissions of your trip. For example in the Terai region of Nepal, WWF have identified critical areas suffering from forest degradation. Projects such as biogas plants (converting human & animal solid waste to gas) provide alternative renewable fuel resources. 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.com and click on our ethics.

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. Our partner charities and areas of investment include:
Education: We believe all development starts with educating the people. We support community education programmes, child sponsorship, and interest free loans for adult education through our beneficiary charities: CHANCE & Save the Children.
Community Development: In association with local charity KEEP (Kathmandu Environmental Education Project) 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: 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 support the work of WWF which helps the communities re-instate the forest environment and woodland habitats and provide alternative energy sources.

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!

The choice is easy when you

....Doing the right thing