

EXPLORE!

Private Guided - Annapurna Sanctuary
15 days

Nepal - Trip code PJAS



Private Guided - Annapurna Sanctuary

Discover a world of breathtaking mountain peaks on this exciting expedition to the vast natural amphitheatre of the Annapurna Sanctuary. Leaving the foothills behind you pass under the great bulk of Machhapuchhre and spend two nights at Base Camp. After the trek, take time to explore the lakeside town of Pokhara and busy streets of Kathmandu.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Annapurna Sanctuary trek** - Trek through stunning mountain scenery to reach the Sanctuary's natural amphitheatre
- ★ **Pokhara** - Relax after the trek by the lakeside or visit the nearby Tibetan village and Buddhist Monastery
- ★ **Kathmandu** - Spend time wandering through Durbar Square and exploring the capitals temples and stupas

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Simple

These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, sometimes with en suite facilities.

WALKING GRADE:

Challenging

You need to have a good level of fitness and previous trekking experience is recommended. Trekking days are generally longer, challenging and at higher altitudes. Terrain may be difficult and ascents and descents are often demanding.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip Kathmandu

The trip begins today in Kathmandu. The day is at leisure to relax or take a first wander in the bustling streets of Kathmandu.



Accommodation: Yellow Pagoda Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - In Kathmandu; sightseeing including Pashupatinath

After breakfast there will be a trek briefing by your trek guide to let you know the programme for the next few days, to make sure you are properly equipped for the trek and to give you an idea of what to expect on a day to day basis. We have then arranged a walking tour, visiting the bazaar and the Durbar Square area, the centre of old Kathmandu. Much of the day to day life of Kathmandu takes place in the bazaar: a fascinating mixture of people selling fruit, vegetables and spices; potters spinning their wheels to produce small household bowls and containers for temple offerings; devotees visiting their favourite gods at temples and small shrines dotted along the sides of alleyways; rickshaw wallahs honking their horns and the ever present sacred cow wandering amongst it all. In the afternoon you will visit the Temple of Pashupatinath on the banks of the Bagmati River, the holiest Hindu shrine in Nepal as well as Bodnath, the largest stupa in the country and a destination for Buddhist pilgrims from all over Nepal.



Accommodation: Yellow Pagoda Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 3 - Drive to Pokhara

Leaving the capital today you drive to Pokhara. The drive will take much of the day but there is plenty to see as the landscape changes and the Annapurna Range comes in to view.



Accommodation: Hotel Utsab Himalaya (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Drive to Kimche; trek on stone steps to Ghandruk

Today you leave Pokhara and drive via Nayapul to Kimche Village where you begin the trek. Today's walk follows a stone pathway, and for the most time you are climbing roughly hewn steps - it can be tough on the knees so bring walking poles. Your base for tonight is the small settlement of Ghandruk. Approximately 3 hours walking. Overnight altitude 1940m.



Accommodation: Ghandruk Tea House (or similar)



Simple Teahouse



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 5 - Trek via Taulung to Chhomrong

Today you start with an ascent before dropping down to cross the Kimrong Khola by bridge, before making a short ascent to Taulung. You then begin the long steep ascent to join the main trail to Chhomrong. The high point above the main valley is a favourite place for soaring vultures, griffons and lammergeiers, providing some awesome vistas as you begin the descent to Chomrong (2060m), the last major settlement before the Sanctuary and an attractive place to end the day amidst its alpine lodges and scenic views. Approximately 6 hours walking. Overnight altitude 2060m.



Accommodation: Chomrong Tea House (or similar)



Simple Teahouse



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 6 - Trek through rhododendron forest to Dovan

Descending to cross the Chhomrong Khola River by suspension bridge, there are some excellent views of Machhapuchhre today (now exhibiting its distinctive 'fishtail' profile) and Annapurna South. You continue to climb steeply, negotiating a trail that leads through oak and rhododendron forests until reaching a welcome teahouse on top of the ridge at Sinuwa (2350m). The ascent to Kuldigarth (2470m) is then more gradual, continuing through more lush forest to the lunch stop at the Bamboo Hotel (2340m). This afternoon you continue the ascent towards Dovan, beyond which lies the unofficial gateway into the Sanctuary, walking through wet bamboo forest to reach your accommodation later this afternoon. Approximately 6-7 hours walking. Overnight altitude 2630m.



Accommodation: Tip Top Lodge (or similar)



Simple Teahouse

DAY 7 - Trek past waterfalls and bamboo forest to Deurali

This morning the track continues up past the so-called 'weeping wall' and the shrine of the 'God of the Jungle', to the Himalaya Hotel (2840m). Passing several spectacular waterfalls which cascade down the opposite side of the Modi Khola, you climb through bamboo forest to reach Hinku Cave at 3100m. You ascend further until reaching the small settlement of Deurali where you will spend the night. Approximately 4 hours walking. Overnight altitude 3200m.



Accommodation: Deurali Tea House (or similar)



Simple Teahouse

DAY 8 - Trek to Machhapuchhre Base Camp (3720m)

Today you climb further to pass between Machhapuchhre and Huinchuli - the 'Gates' into the Sanctuary. Climbing over rocky moraine you arrive at Machhapuchhre Base Camp (3720m). Overshadowed by Annapurna South and the beautiful shape of Machhapuchhre (machha, fish' and puchhre, 'tail'), one of Nepal's holy mountains, this is a quite awe-inspiring setting in which to end the day's trekking, the mountain landscapes providing a sight to raise the spirits of even the most tired. Approximately 3 hours walking. Overnight altitude 3720m.



Accommodation: Machhapuchhre Tea House (or similar)



Simple Teahouse

DAY 9 - Trek to Annapurna Base Camp (4130m); descend to Machhapuchhre Base Camp

You spend the day enjoying the views within the very heart of the Sanctuary. Having made a 'crack of dawn' start to get the best of the day, you follow part of the route taken by British mountaineer Chris Bonnington on the 1970 Annapurna south face expedition. Following west along a moraine to the north of Huinchuli, you reach several stone buildings at 4130m and then ascend to a spectacular viewpoint. Here there are amazing views of the encircling peaks including close up views of the south face of Annapurna I which towers over the Sanctuary and also of Annapurna South glacier. You will have time to enjoy this special mountain panorama, to sit amongst the edelweiss and watch the ice carving its way from the glacier, before descending back to Machhapuchhre Base Camp. Approximately 3.5 hours walking. Overnight altitude 3720m.



Accommodation: Machhapuchhre Tea House (or similar)



Simple Teahouse

DAY 10 - Descend to Bamboo

You begin your descent today heading for Bamboo (2340m), passing through the bamboo forest and crossing a number of rocky avalanche chutes. Approximately 6 hours walking. Overnight altitude 2450m.



Accommodation: Bamboo Lodge (or similar)



Simple Teahouse



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 11 - Trek to Jhinu Danda via Chhomrong

Descending through rhododendron forest full of noisy birds - mostly Black-capped Sibia, you then cross the Chomrong Khola and climb up to Chhomrong village (2060m) where you take a rest break. You then begin a short climb back up through forest to the small village of Komrong Danda (2654m). Shortly after you reach Jhinu Danda, your home for the night. Approximately 6 hours walking. Overnight altitude 1700m.



Accommodation: Jhinu Danda Lodge (or similar)



Simple Teahouse



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 12 - Trek to Kimche, drive to Pokhara

Your final day of trekking sees you first descending to the Kimrong Khola which you cross and then tackle a short ascent. Descending further you follow the Modi River until Kimche where you meet your bus and make the short drive back to Pokhara where a hot shower and one of the towns many bakeries awaits. Approximately 5 hours walking.



Accommodation: Hotel Utsab Himalaya (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - Free day in Pokhara to relax

Pokhara is smaller and more relaxed than Kathmandu and is beautifully situated on the banks of Phewa Tal (lake). Only foothills separate the town from the high mountains and there are superb views of the snowcapped Annapurna range, including Machhapuchhre - the famous 'Fishtail' mountain. Your day here is free to relax after the trek. There is the option to take a small boat across the lake and walk to the Japanese Peace Pagoda or simply relax in one of the lakeside cafe gardens after exploring the many souvenir shops.



Accommodation: Hotel Utsab Himalaya (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 14 - Drive to Kathmandu

Today you drive back to Kathmandu. The drive takes around 6 hours, however along the way you are rewarded with views of the Himalaya.



Accommodation: Yellow Pagoda Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 15 - Trip ends in Kathmandu

The trip ends after breakfast this morning in Kathmandu.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Walking and Trekking information

Walking grade

Challenging

Trek details

This is a 9-day trek with an average of 6 hours walking each day, often on clear trails but with steep stone steps in several sections. There are several ascents of 1000m and the maximum altitude reached will be 4130m. We have graded this trip as Challenging.

Max walking altitude (m)

4130

Why book this trip

Reasons to trek Nepal with Explore - Local knowledge: Over 30 years of experience in organising treks in Nepal and long established network of local partners throughout the country - Our trekking ascent rates are carefully planned to be safe and fall within Wilderness Medicine Society (WMS) guidelines - We carry a Portable Altitude Chamber (PAC) on treks above 3000 metres - On treks into extremely remote areas we carry a satellite phone for emergency use - We support our trek crew by following the guidelines of the International Porter Protection Group (www.ippg.net) - All our trekking staff are Nepali - revenues from our treks benefit the local people - All meals are included on camping and teahouse based treks making them excellent value for money - FREE Explore kitbag. If you trek with us in Nepal you will receive a free Explore kitbag when you arrive in Kathmandu

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 14
Lunch: 9
Dinner: 8



Transport

Bus



Trip staff

Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)
Porter(s)
Trek Crew



Accommodation

6 nights standard hotel
8 nights simple teahouse

Trip information

Country information

Nepal Holidays & Tours

Climate

Temperatures in the lower altitude regions are extremely pleasant. At Pokhara variations in temperature are very limited: from the coldest recorded of 8°C (46°F) to the highest of 31°C (88°F). The mountains are best admired, with greater air clarity, from October to January, while from February to May the skies may be hazy. Monsoon rains are strongest in June, July and August. The coldest months are December and January.

Time difference to GMT

+5.45

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Hinduism

Language

Nepali

Budgeting and packing

Clothing

Being properly equipped is one of the keys to a successful trek. The following check list and notes to be sure that you have what you need for the actual trek. Long Trousers - For everyday walking, light cotton trousers are the most suitable. Knee length shorts are acceptable in the more remote areas, but to avoid giving offence in the villages, you should cover up with trousers. Although comfortable, leggings are also unsuitable as they too cause offence to local people. Jeans are not recommended as they are often difficult to walk in over longer distances and become cumbersome when wet. Down Jacket - After sunset, temperatures can fall below freezing. A down jacket is the lightest and most convenient way of keeping warm when the temperature drops. Down jackets can be inexpensively hired or bought in Nepal. Details will be given at the briefing in Kathmandu. Waterproofs - Breathable waterproofs not only protect against rain and wind but also stop you from overheating. They 'breathe' and avoid condensation which you will experience from nylon waterproofs. Rain during the trekking season is fairly rare but can be heavy if it does happen. Gloves - Especially useful in the morning and in the evening at higher altitudes. Thermal types are most suitable. Socks - It is best to wear a pair of reasonably thick loop stitch socks. This helps to protect your feet against blisters. Avoid nylon socks, they are abrasive, don't breathe well and can cause blisters. Lightweight Shoes or Trainers - Useful in towns and when travelling. Thick fleece pullover/jacket - A thick fleece pullover or jacket is necessary as nights can be very cold at altitude. Make sure that your waterproof jacket is loose enough to wear over your pullover or jacket. Track Suit - Comfortable and much more practical (and warmer) to sleep in than pyjamas. Alternatively, thermal underwear is good. Thin Shirt/T-Shirt Thick Shirt or Thermal Vest Warm Hat

Footwear

We strongly recommend walking in a good, comfortable, broken in pair of boots. Trainers and tennis shoes do not give the ankle support afforded by a decent pair of walking boots. Ideally, visit a specialist outdoor pursuits shop who will offer advice. It is a good idea to carry your boots in your hand luggage on international flights or wear them. Trainers and/or sandals are useful for post trek relaxation, whilst travelling and in towns.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

Your luggage should consist of three main pieces: Main Baggage: The item of luggage used to carry all your belongings in the hold of the plane and used to store all of the items you don't need on trek. This can be left behind at the group hotel used prior to the trek. Trek Kitbag: Customers on all of our treks in Nepal receive a free Explore kitbag on the tour prior to the start of the trek. Approximately 80 litres in size it's ideal for all items you need to take on trek and the luggage preferred by our porters. The weight limit for this is 10kg but you will probably find that you do not need this much. Daysac/Rucksack: 30-35 litres recommended. During the course of a trekking day, you do not have access to the luggage which is being carried for you by the porters. In any mountain region the weather can change rapidly and you must be equipped for this eventuality. Your daysac should therefore be large enough to carry waterproofs, fleece jacket/wearer, long trousers (if walking in shorts), warm hat and gloves, sun hat, sun cream, water bottle (minimum 1 litre) and your camera. Most people normally find that this adds up to about 2 to 3kg. Other optional items in a daysac might be a diary or a book to read at lunch time. On a few occasions it is also necessary to carry your own packed lunch. We advise you to take a waterproof rucksack cover or alternatively line the sack with a large plastic bag to keep the contents dry. Advice on how and what to pack for the trek will be given at the tour briefing but it may be useful to do a trial pack before you leave home.

Equipment

Water Bottle - Water along the trail must never be considered as drinkable. Each day you must sterilise water with Chlorine Dioxide with which to fill your own bottle. 1 litre is the minimum size suitable. If you dislike the taste of sterilised water, it is a good idea to add some powdered fruit juice. You MUST bring Chlorine Dioxide with you on this trek. For environmental reasons, we do not encourage the purchase of bottled mineral water nor the boiling of water due to fuel and power shortages. Plastic Bags - If you pack bits and pieces in plastic bags inside your bag they will stay dry in case of rain and be easier for you to sort through in camp. Remember, the less you have to unpack in the evening, the less you have to repack each morning! A bin liner to pack inside your daysac is also a good idea. Torch/Batteries/Bulb - A small torch is essential for finding things in your room. Head torches are particularly useful. There may be only a limited selection of batteries available locally so bring spare batteries and bulb. Toiletries - Try to keep heavy cosmetics etc to a minimum. Essentials are toothbrush/paste, biodegradable soap, small towel, small nailbrush and toilet rolls. Wet wipes are great for a quick clean up. Sunglasses/Goggles - A good pair of sunglasses is essential for protection against UV rays and glare at high altitudes. Sun Hat, High Factor Sun Cream/Block & Lip Salve Choose a high factor suncream (Factor 15 or more) to protect your skin against the sun at high altitudes. A combination sunblock/lipsalve is ideal for facial protection. Personal First Aid Kit - Each trek carries an extensive first aid kit but no prescription medicines. You should have your own supply of plasters, aspirin, diarrhoea tablets and also a comprehensive blister kit as well as any other medicines you and your doctor feels advisable. (Please do not give medicines to local people without consulting the trek leader.) Trekking poles - Trekking poles with rubber points are recommended. Gaiters Whistle - To attract attention in an emergency. Spare Laces Swimsuit Antibacterial handwash Sleeping Bag- The teahouses we use on trek all provide bedding and blankets however you will need a 4-season sleeping bag and fleece liner for warmth. Bandana Almost every item required for a trek can be purchased or hired in Kathmandu and your Tour Leader can advise on the best shops to visit at your tour briefing. Equipment Hire. It is possible to hire equipment for your trek while in Kathmandu. The costs of hiring are as follows: Please note: each item has a minimum charge of 7 days and then an additional per day charge added every after that if longer than 7 days: Sleeping Bag (4 season)- Rs.60 per day (Rs.420 for 7 days- minimum) Cotton sleeping bag inner liner (new)- Rs.150 per day (Rs.1050 for 7 days- minimum) Down Jacket- Rs.50 per day (Rs.350 for 7 days- minimum)

Tipping

Local crew

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow £45 for tipping of trek staff, drivers, guides etc.

Country Information

Nepal Holidays & Tours

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£7

Dinner price

£10

Beer price

£3

Water price

£0.3

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Nepali Rupee.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

US\$ or GBP.

Where To Exchange

In major cities and towns

ATM Availability

Although you may occasionally find cash machines these are very unreliable - do not rely on plastic!

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are not generally accepted except in larger establishments in Kathmandu.

Travellers Cheques

Travellers cheques are not accepted as a valid mode of payment in Nepal.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus

Essential information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office

[advice click here.](#)

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa Information

Nepal: An entry visa is required by UK, New Zealand, Australian, USA & Canadian citizens and can be obtained on arrival at Kathmandu Airport and various international border crossings between Nepal and its neighbouring countries. This currently costs 25USD for a 15 day visa, and 40USD for a 30 day visa. All visas are issued as multiple entry visas and are valid from the date they are issued. A passport-sized photograph for immigration is required. Payment must be made in cash, UK sterling and US dollars are both accepted. All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Maximum altitude (m)

4130

Altitude information

This trip goes to an altitude where there is a risk of being affected by Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), a common and usually harmless condition caused by reduced air pressure and a lower concentration of oxygen. Whilst the itinerary has been specifically designed to allow your body to acclimatise gradually, the speed of onset and severity - as well as the height at which AMS develops can vary greatly between individuals; being physically fit affords no special protection. If symptoms occur while on tour you must let your trek guide know immediately. For further advice when travelling at altitude we recommend visiting the medical advice website of Medex and download their information booklet: http://medex.org.uk/medex_book/english_version.php We carry a PAC bag (Portable Altitude Chamber) on all Annapurna Sanctuary treks which can be used to treat altitude sickness. Travellers with heart or lung conditions, anaemia, asthma, high blood pressure, or taking the contraceptive pill must seek the advice of their GP and specifically mention the maximum altitude the trip reaches (please refer to Tour Essentials box on front page of your Tour Notes). Please take these to your medical appointment so that your doctor has the full details of your trip. You must have adequate travel insurance for your trip. Please ensure that your insurance policy covers you to the maximum altitude indicated above. If you have Explore insurance you will be covered to this altitude.

Nepal Holidays & Tours

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, infectious hepatitis, typhoid, tetanus, polio and Japanese encephalitis. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Although not compulsory, travellers may wish to take immunisation against meningococcal meningitis.
