



Kathmandu and Pokhara Explorer Grade 2 Departs daily for 2

Kathmandu is an exotic and fascinating showcase of a very rich culture, art and tradition. The valley is encircled by a range of green terraced hills and dotted by compact clusters of red tiled-roofed houses. Pokhara is a place of natural beauty is known as a centre of adventure, has several beautiful lakes and offers stunning panoramic views of the Himalaya. Phewa lake is the centre of all attractions in Pokhara and the starting and ending point for many of the popular trekking routes in Nepal. Our day hikes will include Naudanda, Sarangkot and Dhampus with stunning views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges.

Outline Itinerary:

1 Arrive Kathmandu overnight in Hotel Vaishali or Gongjong

2 Kathmandu. Half day sightseeing. Bouddha, Pashupati, Shyambhu (B)

3 Half day sightseeing tour of Patan (B)

4 Drive to Pokhara by green line bus, overnight at Hotel Stupa or Green Park (B)

5 Day hike to Sarangkot. Overnight at Hotel Green Park (B+L)

6 Day hike to Dhampus. Green Park (B+L)

7 Drive to Naudanda and walk to Sarangkot. Drive back to Pokhara. (B+L)

8 Day hike to Kalikaasthan. Green Park (B+L)

9 Cross Pewa Lake by boat and climb the Peace Monastery overnight Hotel Green Park (N+L)



10 Day hike to Sundare danda, and the cross the Begnas lake by boat and return to Pokhara. Afternoon sightseeing tour of Monastery. (B)

11 Drive back to Kathmandu by Green Line bus. (B)

12 Day hike to Nagarkot Shankhu. Overnight at Hotel View Point (B)

13 Day hike to Changu Narayan and the sightseeing tour of Bhaktapur. (B)

14 Kathmandu Free day (B)

15 Transfer to airport for departure (B)

KATHMANDU

DURBAR SQUARE Kathmandu's most impressive sight, Durbar Square is a colourful hotch-potch of temples and palaces. It is also home to Kathmandu's Kumari, or 'living goddess', a young girl believed to be a reincarnation of the goddess Durga.

SWAYAMBHUNATH Known as the 'monkey temple' because of its resident swarm of apes, this spectacular Buddhist Stupa, from which the Buddha's eyes gaze serenely down, lies on a hilltop only 2km from Kathmandu. The views down over Kathmandu and the surrounding valley are superb.

BOUDHANATH 8km from the city center, this is Kathmandu's largest Stupa. It's especially colorful on Saturdays, when Tibetan refugees flock here to pray.

PASHUPATINATH TEMPLE On the bank of the sacred Bagmati River, this Shiva Temple is famous for its two-tiered golden roof and silver doors.

PATAN

The ancient city of Patan faces Kathmandu on the southern bank of the River Bagmati. It's a colorful place, with Hindu temples and Buddhist monuments jostling side by side in its narrow, winding streets and unexpected squares.

DURBAR SQUARE Exquisitely carved palaces, temples and shrines litter the square, which is

dominated by the ancient Royal Palace. Nestling in one corner is the triple-roofed octagonal tower of the 17th Century Teleju Bhawani Temple.

KRISHAN MANDIR The first of its kind to be built, this 17th Century temple is the only one in Nepal with entirely stone-carved shrines.

HIRANYA VARAN MAHAVIHAR A 12th Century, three-tiered Golden Pagoda of Lord Buddha.

KUMBHESHWOR A Shiva Temple with an unusual five-tiered roof.

BHAKTAPUR

One of the three ancient cities of Nepal, Bhaktapur is the home of medieval art and architecture, as well as thriving local pottery and weaving industries.

DURBAR SQUARE This spacious, beautiful square is packed from end to end with ancient temples and monuments. These include the colourfully named 'Lion Gate' and 'The Bell of the Barking Dogs.' It's a great place to explore for an hour or two and absorb the local life.

NYATAPOLA TEMPLE Dating back to 1702, this five-storey pagoda is an impressive sight staring down at you from the terraces are intricately carved figures of wrestlers, elephants, lions and griffins.

POKHARA

Pokhara is a rare combination of the long arrays of snowclad peaks, crystal clear lakes, turbulent rivers with deep gorges and picturesque villages inhabited by simple and friendly ethnic people. Situated at the lap of the panoramic Annapurna Himal, the climate of Pokhara remains favourable all the year round neither too warm nor too cold. The monsoon rains are strongest during June to August. Other months are relatively dry.

The moment you step into any part of Pokhara the first thing that takes you to immediate delight is the gorgeous view of the gigantic mountains. Pokhara is in fact, the first and foremost convenient point for mountain-oriented sightseeing. Mt. Annapurna, literally meaning the Goddess of Abundant Harvest, lies at a horizontal distance of 40 km. from the valley of Pokhara which is at an elevation of just 900 metre above main sea level.

LAKES

Pokhara is a city of fine lakes with crystalline water. Phewa Tal is in the immediate vicinity of the city is with an island temple dedicated to Goddess Barahi in

the middle. With its serene water reflecting the Annapurna range and a nicely preserved forest on the adjoining southern slope, this legendary second largest lake of the Kingdom remains a major source of attraction for the visiting tourists. This lake can also be enjoyed by swimming.

Begnas & Rupa, these twin lakes lie in the north-east of Pokhara valley about 15 km away from the airport. The road to Begnas follows Kathmandu-Pokhara Highway as far as Sisuwa near the police check post and branches off the road towards north. It is possible to take a bus ride to the damside of Begnas from the city.

TEMPLES

Two temples are really worth visiting in the Pokhara area. Bindabasini temple some way between downtown Mahendrapul and Bagar is one of them. The temple is located on top of a beautiful mound overlooking the most popular area of the Pokhara city. The road to Sarangkot starts from the foot of this mound.

The next one is Barahi temple situated on a small island in the middle of Phewa Tal. A stop at this serene temple after a canoe ride is really worthwhile. There is a nice Buddhist monastery on the top of a small forested hill above Matepani east of Mahendrapul. It overlooks the majority of Pokhara area. A little south of this monastery on another small but beautiful hill in a pleasant sylvanic setting lies Bhadrakali temple which is also worth visiting.

TIBETAN VILLAGE

There are two Tibetan villages in the vicinity of Pokhara. One of them called Tashiling is in the south past Patale Chhango. The other village by the name of Tashi Palkhel is North of Pokhara at a place called Hyangja on Pokhara Baglung Highway. The Tibetan people living in these villages keep themselves busy by producing and trading in woolen carpets and other handicraft items.

DAY HIKES

All nearby hills of Pokhara are equally good for day hikes. Some of the important ones are given below: One can drive uphill for one hour from the foot of Bindabasini temple along a ridge road to Sarangkot. To Sarangkot: Annapurna range and overlook the valley of Pokhara to enjoy an eye feast of the east. A view tower has been built on the top of Sarangkot hill at an elevation of 1600m.

To Kahun Danda: It is another enchanting hill north of Pokhara and takes about two and a half hours to

reach from Mahendrapul. The trail starts from near the army barrack at Phulbari across Mahendrapul and climbs slowly up a slope. The essential view from top of this hill is the panoramic view of the Annapurna range and the flat span of Pokhara valley.

To Phoksing Danda: This ridge south of Pokhara provides an excellent view of the whole Pokhara valley and the long array of snow peaks beyond. The panorama of the mountains visible at a stretch from here includes the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna ranges, Manaslu, Himalchuli and Ganesh Himal in the distant east. The trail to this ridge starts south of the Pokhara airfield, crosses the Seti river near the power house fed by the Phewa canal and climbs up the slope overlooking the valley. It takes about two and a half hours to get to Phoksing Danda from the power house. Morning time is excellent to visit this ridge.

The ridge trail heading west from Sarangkot used to be the starting point for the Jomosom trek, but the new Baglung Road now funnels trekkers in further west, and the small touristy villages along the old trail are languishing for lack of attention. Day hikers will find it remarkably peaceful.

A half-hour from Sarangkot is Kaski, once the capital of the surrounding countryside, now a minor village. A stone staircase leads about 300 meters above the village to the ruins of the old Kaski Kot or fortress. The small Durga shrine here, little more than a rock pen, is a favorite site for Dasain animal sacrifices. Many of the summits along this ridge have old temples to the goddess Durga, who serves as bloodthirsty protectress of the villages below.

Ninety minutes further along the ridge is the village of Naudanda (1458 meters), where good mountain views include the first glimpse of Machhapuchhare's twin-peaked "fishtail." The village is not particularly pleasant but has lots of lodges and restaurants. A police checkpoint will prevent you from continuing further without a trekking permit, and the Baglung Road cutting across the ridge has pretty much ruined the immediate vicinity for trekking--there's little joy to be had in plodding down a dusty road. (Things do improve after the road veers west down to Kusma, and the trail continues on to Chandrakot.) If you can't find a ride back to Pokhara from Naudanda, take the steep trail dropping down north, which reaches Phedi in about 90 minutes. From here, jeeps run back to town on a regular basis.

NAGARKOT

Nagarkot is located on the rim of Kathmandu Valley at an elevation of 7,200 feet and offers a 200-mile panorama of the Himalayas from Mt Everest in the

east to Dhaulagiri in the west. It is 75 minutes drive from Kathmandu and is best for sunrise and sunset.

At dawn and dusk the snow-covered peaks are painted in shades of rose, pink orange and gold. It is a sight not to miss, though one can never be sure of the visibility of the mountain ranges even during the winter months. Seeing a single pink peak appearing in the midst of clouds can be as thrilling as seeing the whole 200-mile panorama of peaks. Since mornings are clearer than afternoons, it is recommended spending a night up here.

Nagarkot is also a place for day hikes, especially when you do not have enough time for long treks. The Best part of these hikes is that everything goes down the hill from the time you start. The three possible destinations for day hikes from Nagarkot are Banepa, Sankhu and Changu Narayan.

Lunch either in tea houses or packt will be provided during the day hikes from Pokhara. Cost included green line bus and rest of the places by car.

Important: Before you travel please check your **Tour Voucher** and **Arrival Information** for the latest joining instructions. This will be sent to you upon receipt of final payment.

All itineraries are subject to change without prior notice.