



## **Kaligandaki Valley / Muktinath / Jomsom Trek**

14 nights / 15 days

Tour code : MA-2005

### **Itinerary in detail**

#### **Day 1 - Arrive in Kathmandu**

A representative picks you up from the airport and transfers you to your hotel. Overnight at hotel.

#### **Day 2**

Half-day city sightseeing tour in Kathmandu. Kathmandu is an extraordinary city with the fascinating Durbar Square at its center. The tour takes in the major sites including the 2,000-year-old Swoyambhunath stupa, sometimes known as the monkey temple. The temple charms with its dazzling stupa, while at the same time offers a marvelous view of Kathmandu valley. Next destination is Patan, the oldest and second largest of the three cities in Kathmandu valley. Patan (former name, Lalitpur, meaning city of beauty) is a proud city of artisans, producing nearly all of Nepal's fine metal work. Enroute, stop at a Tibetan carpet factory where you can see the spinning, dyeing and weaving of Tibetan carpets; as well as old Kathmandu itself. Overnight at hotel.

#### **Day 3**

Drive to Pokhara. The 200 km drive to Pokhara takes in some dramatic scenery with deep river valleys, rocky gorges and rapids crossed by suspension bridges. You pass ancient stone villages and terraced rice fields all the while taking in views of Machhapuchhare (Fishtail mountain) and the

Annapurna massif. Once in Pokhara, the silhouette of Fishtail is the dominant sight. In the evening we have a boat trip on Fewa lake for one hour. Overnight at hotel.

#### **Day 4**

Drive to Nayapul. Trek to Tirkhedhunga. After breakfast we drive approximately an hour and a half to Nayapul, a small trading town situated at the banks of the Modi river, where the trek commences. From here it is an hour's walk on the flat, then there is a steep climb on a stone paved path for about an hour and a half to Hille. From here, the trail is easier to Tirkhedhunga. It is a good introductory day to get us used to the experience of trekking. Overnight at guesthouse.

#### **Day 5**

Trek to Ghorepani. Today's walk is a mix of up and down, with the trail first descending to the Bhurundi stream, which we cross, then taking a steep ascent to reach Ulleri, a large Magar village at 2,070m with spectacular views of Machhapuchhare (Fishtail mountain) and Annapurna South. The trail then continues to ascend more gently, through fine forests of oak and rhododendron, towards Bantanti at 2,250m and Nangethanti at 2,460m. After about four hours we reach Ghorepani. Overnight at guesthouse.



#### Day 6

Trek to Tatopani. After breakfast or earlier, we take a side excursion up Poon Hill, where sunrise views of the whole majestic Annapurna region are awe-inspiring. The hike to and back from Poon Hill takes approximately two hours. The rest of the day is spent climbing along ridges and through pine and rhododendron forests to Deurali (2,960m). From here we descend to the Banthanti, then turn off to Tatopani.

After a lovely hot bath, we overnight at the guesthouse.

#### Day 7

Trek to Ghasa. Following the Kaligandaki river gorge crossing two bridges, we pass Dana and a beautiful waterfall, after which there is a steep ascent followed by a steep descent. Once back along the bank of the Kaligandaki, we walk another hour or so to reach Ghasa. Overnight at guesthouse.

#### Day 8

Trek to Marpha. Today's trek ascends gradually crossing the wide Kaligandaki valley for about six to seven hours. Areas of rhododendron trees and some small sparsely populated villages gradually give way to apple orchards surrounded by stone walls, then a stone gate marking the entrance to Marpha. White-washed houses line both sides of the village's narrow paved road, under which flows a clever drainage system. Overnight at lodge.

#### Day 9

Trek to Kagbeni. Marpha is famed for its apple brandy, so heads may not be too clear for the early morning walk along the trail to Kagbeni! Now the landscape becomes increasingly arid and barren,

with an impressive mix of browns, yellows and greys contrasting with the white snowcaps of Tilicho and Nilgiri. Stay overnight at Kagbeni, a village that proudly showcases unique Tibetan culture and hospitality.

#### Day 10

Trek to Muktinath. The trail steeply ascends after Kagbeni for couple of hundred meters then flattens out into a barren desert-like landscape all the way up the Thorong La valley to Muktinath. Take in the scenery of old caves, Tibetan-style villages, yak and sheep herds and plenty of pilgrims. After a stop at Jharkot where there is a famous 15th century monastery, we ascend once more to reach Muktinath. Muktinath is a pilgrimage center for both Buddhists and Hindus, so you'll see Tibetan traders as well as sadhus from the far south of India. Shrines in a grove of trees, a Buddhist gumpa and the Vishnu temple of Jwalamai are all attractions. An old temple shelters a spring and natural gas jets that combine to produce Muktinath's famous "eternal flame" – the earth-water-fire combination accounts for the village's religious significance. Overnight at lodge.

#### Day 11

Trek to Jomsom. The two hour trek to Jomsom is mainly on the flat, so is pretty straightforward. A large bustling settlement, Jomsom is the administrative center of the region, a veritable metropolis with an airport, army camp, bank and numerous hotels, shops and more. Overnight at Jomsom.

#### Day 12

Fly from Jomsom to Pokhara. Jomsom has a very tiny airport with only small planes flying weather permitting, so we head out only when there is not too much wind. Overnight at Pokhara.



Day 13

Free day in Pokhara. Celebrating the end of the trek and taking in the beauty of Pokhara with its several lakes and outstanding mountain views, we have a free day of rest. Overnight at hotel.

Day 14

Fly from Pokhara to Kathmandu. After the flight from Pokhara to Kathmandu, we have a free rest of day in Kathmandu. Overnight at hotel.

Day 15 - Tour concludes

The tour concludes with an assisted transfer to the international airport for onward flight.