

Visiting Temples and Monasteries

You can visit all the Hindu temples and Buddhist shrines in Nepal except for the Pashupatinath Temple (you can visit there only from the back side). In some instances, you may not be allowed to visit the grounds or outer areas (unless you are Hindu). There is no restriction in Buddhist shrines. If you are allowed inside the temple premises make sure to take off your shoes, leather belts before entering. Taking pictures is not allowed in some temples, please ask first to be sure, or look around you to see if others are taking one. Hindus and Buddhists always walk clockwise around the temple, please follow this rule. Lastly always be careful around Holy men. Women should especially avoid coming in physical contact with monks and priests. Buddhist monks are held in high positions and are deeply revered.



Visiting Temples and monasteries are also a good way to support the local community economically. Some heritage sites require an entry fee for foreigners. However, most religious sites have a donation box to collect money to help with the maintenance and operation of the sites.

Minor (and Major) Annoyances

You may be bothered by children, beggars, and street vendors, mainly in the temple and Thamel areas. Ignoring them is one of the best ways to avoid unwanted attention. Criticism should be given privately. Generally, Nepalese people are indirect, and criticisms are seldom made face to face. Always keep an eye on your belongings while traveling.

Transportation

Taxis and local bus services are available which serve various destinations in the Kathmandu Valley and beyond. However, ride sharing apps for taxis and motorbikes are also available, but make sure to get a local sim provider to use

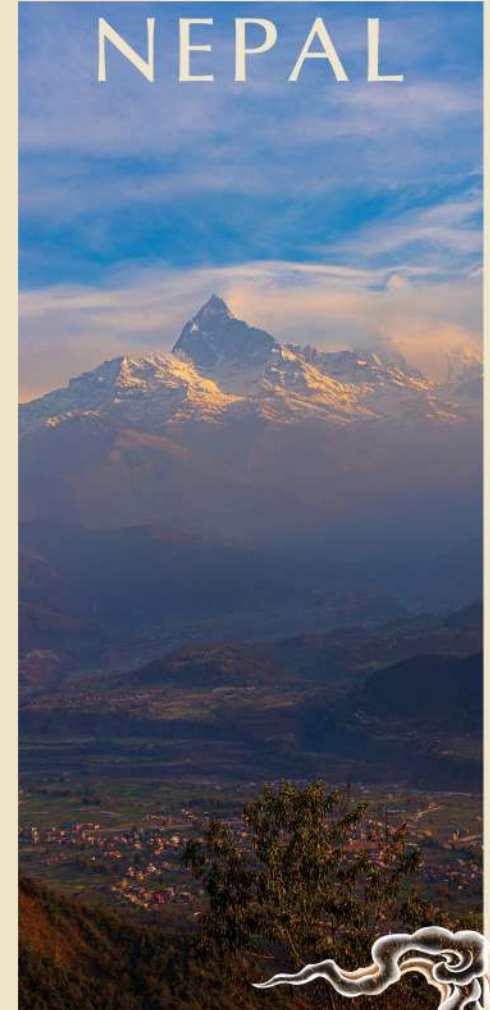
1. Sajha Yatayat (Government buses): their buses are the huge 38 seater buses managed by the Nepal government. They operate on major routes and stop right outside Hotel Shambala. Fixed rates apply depending on your zone.
2. Micro buses: There are the 14 seater vans privately operated and often go further out and all over the city. They call out route stops when you board the vehicle so you can ask them if it is headed in the direction of your destination. Fixed rates apply depending on your zone.
3. Taxis: public taxis are available easily outside the hotel. Our front office staff can assist you if necessary. They operate based on a taximeter but also on a pre-agreed price due to fluctuating fuel prices. You WILL need to bargain!
4. Ride Sharing Apps:
 - 4.1. Pathao: Pathao is a ride sharing app for motorcycles and cars (taxis). You need to download the app on your mobile phone. You can enter your pickup point and destination and the app calculates the rate and assigns a driver for you. Much like Uber/Grab/Bolt. Please note you will need a local mobile number for this.
 - 4.2. INdrive: Similar to Pathao, it is a ride sharing app. You will need to download the app and set it up. Please note you will need a local mobile number for this.

For your best interest

Anger is best not expressed openly. It causes loss of face and proves embarrassing. So, whenever there is delay in service or someone is making you wait for more than usual, don't lose your calm or show anger in your face as it is frowned upon. Cows are sacred. They walk freely and sleep where they want. Patience is the key.



EXPLORING NEPAL



Note: All the information mentioned above has been gathered online which will be subjected for amendments if deemed necessary. Thus this information is for your knowledge.

Exploring Nepal

Nepal, with its rich ancient cultures set against the most dramatic scenery in the world, is a land of discovery and unique experiences. The traditions and renowned hospitality of its many different groups are a major part of what makes Nepal so special. From remote mountain villages to medieval hill towns and the ancient cities of the Kathmandu Valley, the people of Nepal are always welcoming. Come and experience the bold and unique flavors of Nepalese cuisine, prepared with love and depth of flavor—or join in the celebration at one of the many festivals held year-round. In fact, with more festivals than days in the year, there is nowhere else in the world that can offer as many festivities as Nepal.

Nepal is the country of Mount Everest, the highest mountain peak in the world, and the birthplace of Gautam Buddha, Lumbini. Mountaineering, along with other forms of adventure tourism and ecotourism, are major attractions for visitors. The country also has many important religious pilgrimage sites for followers of various sects and religions.

Nevertheless, for adventure and nature lovers, Nepal is a paradise. Bird watching (646 species—almost 8% of the world's total) is one of the highlights, with around 500 species found in the Kathmandu Valley alone. The ultimate thrill of a bungee jump can now be experienced in Nepal at one of the best sites that this sport can boast of anywhere in the world. Nepal's first bungee jumping site is situated 160 meters above the Bhotekoshi River, offering an unforgettable adrenaline rush in the stunning surroundings of this amazing place.

The best way to explore the Kathmandu Valley is on a mountain bike. Nepal's diverse terrain is a mountain biker's dream—an adventure come true. Mountain biking offers an environmentally sound way of exploring this magnificent country, its landscapes, and its living heritage. Only awe-stricken silence can come close to matching the experience of a mountain flight over the tallest mountains on Earth. Mountain flights offer the closest possible aerial views of Mt. Everest, Kanchenjunga, and the Tibetan Plateau. These flights appeal to all categories of travelers and have become a popular tourist attraction in Nepal. For all the cliffhangers out there, Kathmandu offers a roster of stone walls that make for an experience of a lifetime. In recent years, rock climbing has become a popular sport in Kathmandu, which offers some truly terrific spots for the activity. Nagarjun, Balaju, Shivapuri, and Budhanilkantha are some of the places where you can try this sport.

Culture and Heritage Sites

Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, is known as the city of temples and is rich in cultural heritage. Within a 7 km radius, there are seven World Heritage Sites which are Pashupatinath Temple, Boudhanath Stupa, Swayambhunath Stupa, Changunarayan Temple, Kathmandu Durbar Square, Patan Durbar Square, and Bhaktapur Durbar Square an extraordinary concentration not found anywhere else. Museums in Kathmandu have rich collections of archaeological, historical and artistic importance and galleries display art work of the past and present. Full of art, architecture, and culture, the Kathmandu Valley is a prime destination for tourists. As Nepal is a land of festivities and celebrations, visitors can experience how a culturally diverse and rich society of Nepal grows in harmony.

Cultural Tips (Do's and Don'ts)

Greetings

Raising folded hands (palms together) up to the chest and saying "Namaste" or the more formal "Namaskar" is the traditional way of greeting in Nepal. This expression is used both when meeting and parting. Shaking hands with a person of the same sex and similar age is proper. Generally Nepalese don't shake hands with persons of the opposite sex. Affection between men and women, even married, is seldom expressed in public. Public kissing, hugging, and handholding with the opposite sex might be offensive to most of the Nepalese and a sign of low morals. But it is acceptable for two men or women to walk hand in hand.

Social Etiquettes

Dressing modestly is highly recommended—wear long skirts that reach below the knees, shirts that cover the chest, and pants that are not too short. Especially when visiting a religious site, never wear scanty or revealing clothing. Wearing traditional attire is also appreciated as a gesture of respect. Avoid smoking at pilgrimage sites or in crowded public areas. Do not drink tap water, as it may be contaminated and not purified for drinking.

Bargaining

Bargaining is very common in Nepal. It is appropriate to bargain when shopping on the street, but not in restaurants, department stores, or medical and general stores. Clothing and curio items are highly bargainable.

Visiting a Nepali Household

Appearance is very important in Nepali culture. If you are invited to visit a Nepali household, please go in formal dress. For women, wear something that covers your legs below the knee. For men, trousers and shirts are appropriate.

1. Say "Namaste" after you are introduced to the family members.
2. Take your shoes off outside the door.
3. If there is no chair and you are requested to sit on the mat, it is better to fold or cross your legs. Be sure not to point your feet at anyone.
4. Never step over anyone, food, water, reading or writing materials, or utensils. If you do so, apologize immediately.
5. Don't offer partially eaten food or drinks which has touched your lips, to another person which is considered as "JUTHO" translated as DIRTY & OFFENSIVE.
6. When offered gifts from someone, always use the right hand or take it with both the hands.
7. Touching someone's head can be considered rude, so can pointing your feet at someone or touching things with your feet.
8. In Nepal, people generally eat with their bare hands and wash their hands before and after eating.
9. You may be offered more food than you can eat as a gesture of courtesy. If you are full, politely say no and cover your plate with your hands.

