

Annapurna Explorer Trek

		Duration: 14 Days, Days on trek: 7
From	To	
2010	Dec 2011	
Available on request		Grade: Easy -Moderate Max elevation 3210m
Best times to visit – Spring season March to end of April/start May. Autumn season end of September to end of November and early December.		This trek is also suitable for families with children 6 years +

Land only price per person (join in Kathmandu). Guaranteed to run for a minimum 2 persons. Includes use of down jacket & sleeping bag on trek. Luxury hotel in Kathmandu and Pokhara.

Group Size	Minimum 2 persons
Teahouse style	£1395
Camping style	£1695
Flight Price	From £600

Single hotel supplement (Kathmandu and Pokhara) £425, Single teahouse supplement (on trek) £65, Single tent supplement (on trek) £85

Introduction:

This is one of the shortest but also most interesting treks, passing through the Kaligandaki, one of the deepest gorges in the world. Starting from the lakeside town of Pokhara, you'll follow quiet forest trails past pretty traditional villages and through tranquil landscapes. Reaching the summit of Poon Hill you'll have wonderful panoramic views of the Mustang and Pokhara valleys as well as some of the highest mountains of western Nepal. Throughout the trek you'll see close up views of Dhaulagiri, Annapurna, Machhapuchre (Fishtail Mountain) and the Kaligandaki Valley. You'll also be able to take a relaxing dip in the hot springs at Tatopani and explore the streets, courtyards, temples and World Heritage Sites of Kathmandu at the start and end of your trip. This is a good choice for anyone wanting a good



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introductory trek and chance to experience traditional Nepalese village life and landscapes on a limited timescale as well as a good choice for families with plenty to see and do at a relaxed pace.

Day 01: Arrive Kathmandu

Namaste and welcome to Nepal. You'll be met and assisted at the airport by our local representatives who will arrange your transfer and check in to your hotel. The rest of your day is at leisure to rest and relax after your flight, perhaps take a walk around the local area or simply relax at your hotel. This evening we invite you to enjoy a complimentary welcome dinner at a restaurant in the heart of Kathmandu, before turning in for a good night's rest at the hotel.

Day 02: Kathmandu and Valley

After breakfast today take time to enjoy a day of relaxed sightseeing on a guided tour of some of the highlights of Kathmandu and the surrounding Valley. Enjoy an easy walking tour to Kathmandu's central Durbar Square, site of the ancient palace complex, the living goddess Kumari temple, Hanuman Dhoka and Kastamandap temple. From here we'll continue on to visit Swoyambhunath Stupa, also known as the Monkey Temple, with its fine views over Kathmandu and many interesting features as well as the great stupa itself. Join the devotees, pilgrims and wandering siddhus (holy men) at Pashupatinath. Pashupatinath is the most important Hindu temple in Nepal as well as being one of the most important Shiva temples on the subcontinent, situated on the banks of the holy Bagmati River. Take time to walk around Bodhnath (Boudha) stupa, the largest in Nepal and one of the largest in the world. Boudha is also the centre of Tibetan culture in Nepal and a wonderfully vibrant, interesting community. This evening we'll drive back to Kathmandu where we'll have a group briefing on what to expect when our trek begins tomorrow, a chance for you to ask any remaining questions and to meet your trek crew. The remainder of this evening is free for you to explore the surrounding area or simply relax at the hotel.

Day 03: Kathmandu to Pokhara

This morning we'll drive (approximately five hours with breaks) or the short (20 minutes) scenic flight through beautiful Nepalese countryside to reach the relaxing lakeside resort of Pokhara. Arriving in Pokhara we'll check in to our hotel and the remainder of the day is free to relax and perhaps explore the local area.

Day 04: Pokhara to Pothana

After breakfast today it's a short 45 minute drive to reach Suikhet Phedi and the start of our trek. From here we'll follow the trail for around 2 hours as it ascends up to Dhampus where we'll stop for lunch. After lunch we'll continue our ascent for another hour to reach Pothana where we'll rest and relax at our camp or local teahouse overnight. From Pothana we'll have another good view of Machhapuchre (Fishtail Mountain) as well as Annapurna South.

Day 05: Pothana to Ghandruk

Today we'll be walking along quiet trails for about 3 hours through dense forest. We'll stop for lunch at Landruk. Continuing our journey, the trail takes about 40 minutes walking down to the Modi River. Continuing on, the trail ascends and steepens before we reach Ghandruk village where we'll stay overnight. This is the largest Gurung settlement in the area with the closest views of Annapurna and Machhapuchre.



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Day 06: Ghandruk to Ghorepani (2750m)

Today we'll walk through rich rhododendron forest before stopping for lunch at Tadapani. After lunch it's a short 30 minute trek down followed by a 3 hour climb up to the steep ridge of Deurali pass (3160m). After an easy walk of around an hour, following level trails through the forest we reach Ghorepani where we'll rest for the night. From here we'll be able to see the beautiful scenery of Annapurna and Dhaulagiri.

Day 07: Ghorepani (rest day)

Today is a full day to rest and relax with the option of exploring the local area. In the morning we can climb nearby Poon Hill which is a great viewpoint from where we'll be able to enjoy wonderful panoramic views of the Mustang and Pokhara valleys as well as see the highest mountains of western Nepal.

Day 08: Ghorepani to Tatopani (1190m)

Today we'll walk for around 5 hours downhill to reach Tatopani. Throughout today's trek we'll be able to see great views of Dhaulagiri, Annapurna and the Kaligandaki valley. We'll stop en route for lunch at Sikha before carrying on to Tatopani. Tatopani in Nepali means 'hot water spring' and we'll have a chance to take a welcome and relaxing dip in the hot springs as we rest here overnight.

Day 09: Tatopani to Beni

Today we'll follow the trail along the banks of the Kaligandaki River for around 3 hours, stopping en route for lunch and following the trail through wonderfully tranquil scenery. Another 3 hours walk after lunch brings us to Beni where we'll stay tonight.

Day 10: Beni to Pokhara

This morning we'll drive from Beni back to Pokhara, around a 5-6 hour drive through beautiful countryside. On arrival we'll check in to our hotel with the remainder of the day at leisure to relax in the hotel surrounds or perhaps visit the lakeside area.

Day 11: Pokhara

Today there's time for a half day of relaxed sightseeing in Pokhara and the surrounding area including visits to Davis Waterfall and Mahendra Cave. The remainder of the afternoon is free to rest, explore the local area or perhaps take a walk around the lakeside area.

Day 12: Pokhara to Kathmandu and Valley

After breakfast today we'll drive through the scenic Nepalese countryside to the City of Devotees (Bhaktapur). This traditional and traffic free town is the third major in the Valley. We'll explore the medieval like squares, courtyards and temples of this vibrant town. After a stop for lunch at a restaurant in Bhaktapur it's time to continue with a short drive back to Kathmandu. On arrival we'll check in to our hotel with the rest of the day free for you to relax in the capital or explore the local area.

Day 13: Kathmandu

This is a full day at leisure, to rest and relax, to explore the local area and perhaps do a bit of last minute shopping or to relax with a coffee or glass of wine and watch the world go by. For early risers there's



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also the chance to book an optional mountain flight this morning. Each flight lasts an hour and is a fantastic way to get really close to Mount Everest and the surrounding peaks. Everyone gets a window seat and the crew provides local knowledge of all the peaks as well as the opportunity to visit the cockpit during the flight for even better views of Everest and great photo opportunities.

Day 14: Kathmandu

Today is free to relax until departure or to commence any additional trips or activities you may have booked. If departing, you'll be transferred to the International Airport in time for your return flight home.

Extending your holiday

There are many choices and options if you'd like to extend your holiday before or after your main booking. Here are just a few suggestions of extensions available for this trip:

- Take a jungle safari by charter elephant to spot rare species including the Royal Bengal Tiger in the Chitwan National Park
- Enjoy the adrenaline rush of white water rafting in Nepal
- Relax by the lakeside in Pokhara, Nepal
- See the wonder of the Taj Mahal and enjoy relaxed sightseeing around Delhi
- Visit the mysterious and ancient land of Tibet and travel across the 'roof of the world'

Please contact our UK office if you'd like to extend your stay by booking one of the above options, if you would like ideas or advice on how best to spend your time and budget or if you would like help with arranging any special celebrations during your trip.

Useful Information

The following information is aimed at helping you to decide whether this trip is right for you. Additional information can be found on our website and in our brochure. If you have any questions or would like advice on any aspect of this trip please contact us and we'll be happy to go through everything with you.

Day to Day Itinerary

It must be realized that with adventure travel changes to an itinerary may occur, for example due to unexpected weather conditions. The day to day itinerary is provided as a general guideline and is intended to give you a general sense of what to expect, including places visited and activities during the trip to help with your decision regards which trip is the best one for you. Activities and timings may vary slightly from those outlined Your guide will make any changes necessary and all arrangements during the trip, including explaining reasons for any changes to the itinerary that may occur.

Trip Duration and Grading

This trip is 14 days with Day 1 beginning in Kathmandu and ending with departure from Kathmandu on Day 14. The trip has been graded easy to moderate. It's a low altitude trek and you can expect to walk usually 3-5 hours each day with the occasional steep path. There will also be some short day walks as part of your sightseeing, usually for a few hours, for example when visiting World Heritage sites in Kathmandu and the surrounding Valley.



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Group Size

The maximum number of persons on this trip will be 16 and the minimum number 2 persons. By keeping group sizes small it means we can provide a more personal service to you.

Local Representatives and Guides

You will be met at the airport on arrival by our local representatives who will always be available to help with your arrival, departure and any queries or requirements during your trip. The group will be accompanied by a local English speaking guide throughout the trip. Once you have confirmed your booking we will send you details of how you will be met on arrival and you will meet your guide just after you arrive.

Accommodation

During this trip you will spend 4 nights at a luxury (five star) hotel in Kathmandu (2 nights at the start of your trip and 2 before departure). In Pokhara you'll spend 3 nights (1 before the trek and 2 after) at a deluxe hotel. During your trek you'll spend 6 nights at a fully provisioned tented camp (camping style trek) or at local best quality teahouses (teahouse style trek).

All accommodation is based on twin share. If you are traveling on your own and are happy to share with someone, we will arrange for you to share a room with someone of the same sex, at no extra charge. If you request a single room in Kathmandu or single room/tent during your trek there will be a small supplement charge. It is usually possible to arrange single room accommodation but please contact our office to confirm this.

Meals

All meals on full board basis will be provided during the days spent on trek. On teahouse style treks meals will be provided from the teahouse menus. On camping style treks meals will be freshly prepared and provided by the camp chef and assistants who are part of the Sherpa crew. During the days spent in Kathmandu and Pokhara meals on half board basis only are included in the price. This is to allow you the opportunity and freedom to try out some of the many wonderful eating places, both in Kathmandu and in Pokhara. Snacks, bottled drinks including mineral water and alcohol are not included in the price.

Flight Inclusive Price and International Flights

The flight inclusive price is based on best available price (at the time of producing our current brochure) of economy return flights from the UK added to the 'land only' price. Flight prices are subject to change and do vary throughout the year. We use a variety of airlines and scheduled flights on our trips including British Airways, Air India, Gulf Air, Qatar Air etc. Our ATOL number is T7199 and we work with other ATOL holders to issue flight tickets. For exact air fares and flight classes available at the time you wish to travel please contact us.

Land Only Option

Our trips are based on 'land only' as well as flight inclusive options to allow you the flexibility to choose to make your own arrangements for flights or perhaps to arrive a few days earlier or leave a few days later than the trip or to join the trip from anywhere in the world. If you choose the land only option we will provide full details of how and when to meet the rest of your group, details of your hotel and local



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contacts upon confirmation of your booking. All accommodation during your trip is included in the price although additional days before or after the start and end dates of your trip are not included. We are happy to book additional accommodation or optional activities, based on your requirements and budget, on request.

Please note that whilst at all times we aim to run our trip even with just a few persons, on some of the longer treks or trips, should the group size be less than our minimum operating level we may cancel the trip up to 6 weeks before departure. In the rare event that this happens, we will offer alternative dates or trips or refunds as appropriate and agreed with you. If you are arranging your own flights and accommodation prior to the start date of a group trip we recommend that you book fully flexible and refundable accommodation and transport if booking more than 6 weeks in advance, as should we need to cancel the trip compensation will not be paid for any arrangements that have been made independently.

Climate and Weather

Nepal has a monsoonal two season year with the dry season from October to May and the wet season (monsoon) from June to September. From end September/start October to end November is one of the best times to visit. The vegetation is lush after the rains of the monsoon and the air is clean and fresh. The next best time to visit is February to April at the end of the dry season. It can be a little dusty at this time but the weather is warm and pleasant and it's a great time to see many wildflowers in bloom. December and January are still good in terms of climate and visibility but can be chilly particularly at higher altitudes as well as in the evening in Kathmandu. May and early June can be very hot and uncomfortable and mid June to September can be cloudy with poor visibility and muddy trails although some treks (rainshadow treks) can still be undertaken even during the monsoon.

Clothing and Equipment

Generally lightweight to medium weight clothing in natural fabrics is best with warm clothing a must for chilly evenings and at high altitude. For visits to more remote areas including Everest Base Camp, a warm down jacket, hat and gloves are suitable. It's also useful to wear several layers of clothing as temperatures can change suddenly. To a large extent it depends where you plan to go and what you plan to do. For example during winter if you are on safari in the southern Terai region you'll need a tshirt. At the same time if you're in Kathmandu you'll probably need a jacket as well. And if you're at Everest Base Camp you'll need to be very well wrapped up. During the monsoon you'll need a light rain jacket. We also suggest you take comfortable walking shoes and a small day pack or shoulder bag as well as sunscreen, a hat and good sunglasses. In the mountains and at high altitude the weather can change rapidly so it is important to have appropriate clothing and equipment. Clothing is easily and cheaply available in Kathmandu so it's rarely a problem if you forget to pack something. On fully provisioned camping style treks we provide twin share dome or A frame sleeping tents, kitchen tent, mess tent, toilet tent, tables, chairs, stools, lanterns/candles, thin sleeping mattresses, all crockery and cutlery and a fully equipped kitchen set up. Upon booking with us we will send you a suggested clothing and equipment list appropriate to your trip including details of any must have items or items that can be hired (if required).

Baggage Allowance

We request that you aim for a maximum weight of 15 to 20 kg for your main baggage including clothing and personal equipment. Many of our trips involve porters and/or local flights and 15kg is the maximum safe weight allowance for porters and permitted on local flights. International flights will usually permit up



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to 20kg maximum weight. If trekking, some additional baggage can usually be stored until you return from your trek. Remember you may also want to leave some weight allowance for any items you have bought during your trip! The Himalayan Adventure Company and our local partners are not responsible for excess baggage charges.

FREE Himalayan Adventure Company Travel Gift

On confirmation of booking we will provide a complimentary travel gift, gifts vary each year and previous gifts included trek bag and t- shirt, gifts subject to availability. For clients living outside the UK we will provide a free bag on payment of post and packaging delivery only

Passport and Visa Requirements

A full valid passport and a current visa is required for all trips and treks. Passports must have at least 6 months validity after the completion date of your trip. To secure your booking and avoid any additional charges, information (eg spelling of name) provided to us on your booking form must match exactly the details as shown in your passport.

To enter Nepal you will require a visa which can be obtained in advance from the Royal Nepalese Embassy in London (UK applications) or on arrival at the airport in Kathmandu for a fee of US\$25. The visa process has changed in 2008 and all visas are now multiple entry. We will provide up to date information on visa requirements, costs and the application process on confirmation of your booking or on request.

You are responsible for ensuring you have a valid passport and visa prior to departure. Where appropriate, we will arrange any special permits or visas required to visit specific restricted areas included as part of the itinerary whilst you are in the country and may request information from you to allow us to do this.

Permits

To enter certain areas e.g. National Parks or other trekking or protected areas, you may require a permit. All our trip prices include the cost of relevant permits and entrance fees. Where this is not the case, for example you have booked a tailor made private trip, we will inform you of any required permit fees before you make a booking with us.

Health and Medical Information

It is your responsibility to ensure you are well and fit enough to join the trip. If you are unsure of this please contact our office to talk it through with one of our experienced staff members. We also recommend you speak to your GP if you are in any way unsure of your fitness level required to join the trip. We also suggest you have a thorough medical and dental check up before you travel. You may need specific vaccinations appropriate to the country or area you will visit. You must tell us if you have an existing medical condition or disability that might affect your holiday before you make a booking with us. If, in our reasonable opinion, your chosen holiday is not suitable for your medical condition, disability or level of fitness, we reserve the right to cancel the contract or to suggest more appropriate alternative options for you. A group medical kit will be carried on each trip or trek but we also recommend that individuals carry their own basic first aid kit and we will send a suggested list of items for this when you make a booking.



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For useful health and general travel advice and information we suggest you visit the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo> and also obtain a copy of the UK Department of Health leaflet *Advice on Health for Travellers* or speak to your local GP or practice nurse for their recommendations.

What's Included in the Price?

Airport welcome, pickup and transfer, complimentary group welcome dinner on arrival, professional English speaking local guide services, pre trek briefing on arrival, all accommodation during the trip on double/twin share basis, meals on half board basis in Kathmandu and Pokhara (breakfast and lunch or dinner included) and full board basis (breakfast, lunch, dinner tea, coffee and fruit snacks) during the days on trek, selected either from the teahouse menus (on teahouse style treks) or prepared by the kitchen crew (on camping style treks), all sightseeing and activities as per the trip itinerary, all entrance fees to sites visited as per itinerary, trekking (TIMS) and National Park (ACAP) permits, all local transportation during the trip (by car, local flight etc), a group first aid kit, safe treated boiled drinking water during days on trek, a complimentary Himalayan Adventure Company travel gift, complimentary Safe Seat Plan issued to all our clients confirming 100% financial protection of your booking with us at all times.

What's Not Included in the Price?

Visa fees, international flights (available on request), personal travel insurance (available on request – UK residents only), vaccinations, airport departure taxes (approx £1.30 on local flights and £13 on international flights payable directly at the airport), additional private bus, car or jeep rental to any destination on the trek other than transport provided during the trip, personal expenses e.g. for souvenirs, personal clothes, food or snacks during transfer journeys, bar/alcoholic beverages, bottled water or other soft drinks, excess luggage charges, laundry, phone calls, hot showers during days on trek – please note most teahouses are now charging for provision of hot showers and for electricity charging due to high demand – charges are approximately £1.50-£3.50 per shower and for charging items approx £1.50 - £2.50 per hour, tips for guides, porters, driver etc, alternative transportation, accommodation or other service required as a result of flight delays, weather conditions, road blockage/conditions, strikes, illness or other unexpected event outside of our control (payable locally and directly if required), additional or optional activities (eg mountain flights, rafting, safaris), accommodation, transport or other service not included in the main itinerary (available on request).

Our Experience

We have a love of and respect for the Himalaya. Our founders and office staff are all experienced travelers who share many years of helping other travelers achieve their ambitions. The fact that we specialise in travel to the Himalaya and that we have extensive local knowledge and experience of the area means that we can offer you a wide range of travel options and provide the best standards of service to you. Being an independent specialist travel operator means we can offer a friendly personal service and are able to be flexible and use our experience and contacts to build new and tailor made programs as well as to continue to develop new and improved services. We have a wealth of experience in helping many individuals and groups in designing and planning adventures, ranging from romantic breaks to personal challenges to school study programmes to extreme adventure expeditions, from low budget to no expense spared and we have lots of ideas, suggestions and experience to share with you. We are also delighted to say that many of our clients return again and again to travel with us and many of our new clients are through recommendations and word of mouth from happy and satisfied clients who have previously traveled with us.



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Fair Pricing

We aim to provide you with the best service at fair and competitive prices and excellent value for money. As part of this, most of our trips are priced for different group sizes with the higher price applicable for smaller groups. With larger groups the price drops so that everyone benefits from a cheaper holiday. We offer 'land only' prices, for travellers who prefer to make their own international flight and transfer arrangements but are happy to arrange flights for you on request, using a variety of international carriers from regional and national airports. Our ATOL number is T7199 and we work with other ATOL holders to issue flight tickets. Additionally, we offer special discounts for groups of 10 or over, schools and group leaders. Contact us for more information.



Your Financial Protection

We understand how important it is that the money you spend on your holiday is securely protected. You may also have concerns about booking with an independent operator. To give you peace of mind and confidence in our service to you we have a number of ways in which we protect the money you pay for your holiday. The company is a full member of the Travel Trust Association (<http://www.traveltrust.co.uk>) membership number U3237, in compliance with the EC Directive on Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours. Our ATOL number is T7199 and we work with ATOL licence holders to issue flight tickets. For flight bookings the money you pay is protected under the ATOL holder's licence. For all other arrangements, your payment to us is held in a separate Trust Fund and only released to us on your return. In addition, we provide free to you, a 'Safe Seat Plan' insurance cover which means that in the unlikely case of your money not being held in the Trust Account or of our insolvency, you will be fully reimbursed for the loss of any monies paid to us, up to a limit of £11 000 per person. Therefore, for your peace of mind and confidence, all money you have paid to us is always 100% protected and available to pay for the services you have booked.

Insurance

Before confirming your booking we will need to see evidence of adequate travel insurance. For our higher elevation treks and tours we work with Snowcard who provide excellent and very competitive insurance services for adventure and activity based travel. For no obligation quotes please follow the link on our website from the Useful Links, Make a Booking or Latest News pages where you can check quotes and cover details as well as issue travel insurance online. If you'd like to contact Snowcard directly they can be called on 01327 262805 or visit their website at www.snowcard.co.uk. If calling or emailing please mention you are a Himalayan Adventure Company client to obtain lower rates and quotes based on our trips which are very competitive and offer great levels of cover. Contact us for more information, to request a quote, to see policy wording or to purchase your insurance.

Responsible Tourism

We believe that tourism should benefit local communities and that responsible travel does not mean a compromise in standards. We aim to promote responsible travel that respects and benefits local cultures, communities and environments and we support Tourism Concern, are a sponsor of the



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International Porter Protection Group and a friend of The Sahara Group. We only work with local guides and communities in each region where we operate and we work with local partners, guides, office and support staff and ensure they have good facilities and fair wages and we work as a team to ensure you a wonderful adventure holiday.

Suggested Reading

We recommend you learn about the places and cultures you will visit before you travel so that you can enjoy your travel even more. Below are just a few varied suggestions to get you started:

Lonely Planet Nepal (Travel Guide), Tony Wheeler, Richard Everist, Lindsay Brown (Editor), Bradley Mayhew (Editor), Wanda Vivequin (Editor), Lonely Planet Nepali Phrasebook (Phrasebooks) Mary-Jo O'Rourke, Bimal Shrestha, Trekking the Peaks of Nepal Bill O'Connor, The Ghosts of Everest: The Authorised Story of the Search for Mallory and Irvine, Jochen Hemmleb, Larry A. Johnson, Eric R. Simonson.

How to Book

Once you have chosen your trek or trip, contact our office to check availability and ask any questions you may have. We'll hold a provisional booking for 7 days. Please read our Terms and Conditions prior to making your booking. Then email, post or fax us your completed booking form (available in our brochure or downloaded from our website) along with the appropriate non refundable deposit of £250 per person and (if applicable) any payments for flight bookings. All flight fares are subject to change and availability until final confirmation and as they vary so much throughout the year, all flights must be paid in full at the time of confirmation. If you choose to phone us with your debit or credit card details, a signed and completed booking form will still be required for confirmation of booking. Bookings will only be confirmed once we receive a completed and signed booking form along with appropriate payment.

We will confirm your booking and email you a trip dossier which will include confirmation of your booking, receipt of payment/invoice, a day by day itinerary, visa and trekking permit instructions, vaccination and health information, a suggested first aid pack list, a suggested equipment and clothing list, a suggested reading list appropriate to your destination, a responsible travel briefing and other useful information relevant to your booking.

The final balance for your booking will be due 12 weeks (3 months) before departure. **NO REMINDER WILL BE SENT.** Your Himalayan Adventure Company travel gift will be mailed to you separately, usually a few weeks before your departure date. For clients outside the UK, a gift will be sent on payment of delivery costs only.

We wish you a wonderful Himalayan adventure!

