

# About Nepal

**People:** The population of Nepal was recorded to be about 26.62 million according to a recent survey done by the Central Bureau of Statistics, Nepal. The population comprises of about a 101 ethnic groups speaking over 92 languages. The distinction in caste and ethnicity is understood more easily with a view of customary layout of the population. Though, there exist numerous dialects, the language of unification is the national language, Nepali. Nepali is the official language of the state, spoken and understood by majority of the population. Multiple ethnic groups have their own mother tongues. English is spoken by many in Government and business offices. It is the mode of education in most private schools of Kathmandu and some other cities.

**Northern Himalayan People:** In the northern region of the Himalayas are the Tibetan-speaking groups namely Sherpas, Dolpa-pas, Lopas, Baragaonlis, Manangis. The Sherpas are mainly found in the east, Solu and Khumbu region; the Baragaonlis and Lopas live in the semi-deserted areas of Upper and Lower Mustang in the Tibetan rain-shadow area; the Manangis live in Manang district area; while the Dolpa-pas live in Dolpa district of west Nepal.

**Middle Hills and Valley People:** Several ethnic groups live in the middle hills and valleys. Among them are the Magars, Gurungs, Tamangs, Sunuwars, Newars, Thakalis, Chepangs, Brahmins, Chhetris and Thakuris. There are also occupational castes namely: Damai (tailor), Sarki (cobbler), Kami (blacksmith) and Sunar (goldsmiths).

**Ethnic Diversity in the Kathmandu Valley:** Kathmandu Valley represents a cultural cauldron of the country, where, people from varied backgrounds have come together to present a melting pot. The natives of the Kathmandu Valley are the Newars. Newari culture is an integration of both Hinduism and Buddhism. The Newars of Kathmandu Valley were traders or farmers by occupation in the old days.

**Terai People:** The main ethnic groups in Terai are Tharus, Darai, Kumhal, Majhi and other groups. They speak north Indian dialects like Maithili, Bhojpuri. Owing to the fertile plains of Terai, most inhabitants live on agriculture. There are, however, some occupational castes like Majhi (fisherman), Kumhal (potter) and Danuwar (cart driver).

**For more information about Nepali people,**  
Please visit: <http://census.gov.np/>  
(official web site of the Central Bureau of Statistics).

**Climate:** Climatic conditions of Nepal vary from one place to another in accordance with the geographical features. In the north summers are cool and winters severe, while in south summers are tropical and winters are mild. Nepal has namely five major seasons: spring, summer, monsoon, autumn and winter. An average temperature drop of 6°C occurs for every 1,000 m gain in altitude. In the Terai, summer temperatures exceed 37° C and higher in some areas, winter temperatures range from 7°C to 23°C in the Terai. In mountainous regions, hills and valleys, summers are temperate while winter temperatures can plummet under sub zero. The valley of Kathmandu has a pleasant climate with average summer and winter temperatures of 19°C – 35°C and 2°C – 12°C respectively. The Himalayas act as a barrier to the cold winds blowing from Central Asia in winter, and forms the northern boundary of the monsoon wind patterns. Eighty percent of the precipitation is received during the monsoon (June-September). Winter rains are more pronounced in the western hills. The average annual rainfall is 1,600 mm, but it varies by eco-climatic zones, such as 3,345 mm in Pokhara and below 300 mm in Mustang. An interesting fact is that there is no seasonal constraint on traveling in and through Nepal. Even in December and January, when winter is at its severest, there are compensating bright sun and brilliant views. As with most of the trekking areas in Nepal, the best time to visit are during spring and autumn. Spring is the time for rhododendrons while the clearest skies are found after the monsoon in October and November. However, Nepal can be visited the whole year round.

**Here's a brief view of the average temperatures and rainfall during peak summer and winter in three most popular tourist areas:**

Place	Summer (May, June, July)			Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb)	
	Max (°C)	Min (°C)	Rain (mm)	Max (°C)	Min (°C)
Kathmandu	28.1	19.5	312	19.3	3.0
Pokhara	29.7	21.3	829.7	20.3	7.7
Chitwan	33.0	25.3	404.0	24.1	8.3

**For more information about Nepal's climatic conditions,** please visit: <http://www.dhm.gov.np> (official web site of the Department of Hydrology & Meteorology, Ministry of Environment).

**Nightlife/Clubing:** Kathmandu, which is generally a quiet city after twilight, bustles with life till the wee hours of the morning in the narrow alleys of Thamel and other selected places. Bars and pubs, many of which feature live music, stay open till late night while discotheques function to keep boredom at bay for the young Nepali crowd and tourists out for the night. Frequent private parties are also organized at various places especially during weekends and public holidays.

**Dinning:** Kathmandu offers dining experiences that range from the exotica of five-star menus to the roadside café experience. The best part is that a variety of international cuisines are offered within walking distance or short drive by world-class restaurants and the price range does not burn a hole in the pocket. Indian,

Chinese, Thai, Korean, Japanese, Mexican, Continental, you name it. You'll find them all here.

Visitors can also enjoy the authentic taste of indigenous cuisines in the ethnic ambience of Nepali restaurants. Restaurants and food joints in the nooks and corners of Thamel are especially popular among western visitors. Many restaurants of Kathmandu and Pokhara offer traditional song and dance performances by local artists.

**Shopping:** Shopping for handicrafts and souvenirs in Nepal is a delight, with shop after shop offering a choice even for the most discerning. It's because of their fine craftsmanship and supreme quality that Nepal's handicrafts have been coveted items since ancient times. Popular buys among tourists are hand-knotted woolen carpets, jewelry, pashmina shawls, woolen knitwear, embroidery, thanka paintings, wood carvings, statues and decorative metallic house wares, ceramics and pottery, and rice paper products such as writing pads, calendars and lamp shades. Tea and spices are other popular gifts to take back home. Antiques, however, cannot be taken out of the country. To be on the safe side, visitors should have all antiques examined by the Department of Archeology and obtain a certificate from the office before leaving Nepal. Nepal is also a shopping destination for designer products such as Christian Dior, Gucci, Yves Laurent, Chanel, Nike, Givenchy and many more brand names. And thanks to lower overhead costs, Nepal's department stores and malls offer them at unbeatable prices.

### **Special Interest: Ayurveda:**

Ayurveda dates back to the Vedic period. Ayurveda, the natural way of living, is also the oldest authentically recorded science in existence today. The objective of Ayurveda is to achieve the highest goal of life – inner and outer dynamic harmony. There are several Ayurveda clinics in and around Kathmandu and in different parts of Nepal to help you achieve the different dimensions of health – physical, sensorial, mental and spiritual.

### **Meditation:**

Meditation rejuvenates one's energy level and zeal, so you can feel enlightened – far from the metaphysical world. A meditation course will help you explore in-depth and find a new human within you. There are specialized centers in Kathmandu, Lumbini and other places around the country that offer meditation courses. **Yoga:**

Yoga classes will contribute to the development of a healthy body, a healthy mind and a healthy thought. It also helps one achieve balanced, harmonious and integrated development of all aspects of one's personality. Yoga is a pathway to a true, happy and healthy living. Yogic training eventually prepares one for spiritual awakening, the supreme aim of human life. There are many yoga centers in Kathmandu and other tourist cities in Nepal.

### **Spa:**

Nepal is also becoming a popular destination for spas. Spa is associated with water treatment and is believed to be curative. **Day spas**, which are quite popular among tourists, offer personal care treatments. The emphasis is on nurturing and pure pampering. Regular spa treatment is said to promote good health and prevent

diseases. It also aids in relaxation and rejuvenation. This is achieved by the fusion of traditional healing practices and modern holistic healthcare in generating the self-healing powers of an individual.

**Faith Healing:** Wrapped in innumerable myths and legends, Nepal is a land of magic and mystery. The cult of faith healing in Nepal dates back to pre-historic times, with the Jhankris, or shamans, who, with the garlands of tiny bells around their necks tremble and chant at the beat of a drum which they play during the invocation and possession of spirits. Sometimes their elaborate performance runs for the whole night. Often their ritual also involves the sacrifice of either a rooster or a black goat, depending upon the nature of the complication.

**Astrology:** Astrology also has its origin in the Vedas, the primary texts of Hinduism written thousands of years ago. In Nepal, the moment a baby is born, the first thing they do is note down the exact time of birth. Then it is given to the astrologer, who according to the position of the different planets in the solar system at that precise moment, prepares a *Cheena* (horoscope). Astrologers are also consulted to set the date and auspicious hours for important occasions like weddings and important festivals.

**Butterfly Watching:** Butterflies have been studied in Nepal for over 150 years, with much of the original study and collection done by the British, including one British diplomat in Kathmandu at the time. After 1950, the Japanese became involved in collection through scientific expeditions, and this resulted later in the establishment by Tribhuvan University of the Natural History Museum at Swayambhu in 1974. Records show that Nepal has 11 out of the 15 families of butterflies in the world, or over 500 species, and still today in the 21st century new species keep turning up.

**Fossil Hunting:** To the geological world, the Shaligram is a coiled chambered fossil shell of the extinct Cephalopod mollusk, believed to have been formed during the emergence of the Himalayan heights from the depths of the Tethys Sea millions of years ago. The fossilized stones are, however, sacred to the Nepalis and embody Lord Vishnu, according to Hindu Scriptures. They are found in the Annapurna region up to Damodar Kunda, and also in the waters of the Kaligandaki River right up to Tribeni in Dolalghat. The most popular belt to look for Shaligrams is the banks of the River Kaligandaki at Jomsom where the pilgrims pass on their way to Muktinath.

**Nature:** Nepal's 20 protected areas cover 23.23 percent of its land. Its 10 national parks, three wildlife reserves, six conservations areas and one hunting reserve cover various geographical locations from the sub-tropical Terai jungles to the arctic Himalayan region. Two of Nepal's natural areas are listed by UNESCO as Natural World Heritage Sites. They are: Chitwan National Park and Sagarmatha National Park. Comprising only 0.1 percent of the total land area on a global scale, Nepal possesses a disproportionately rich biodiversity. Of the total number of species found globally, Nepal possesses 2.80 percent plants, 3.96 percent mammals, 3.72 percent butterflies and 8.9 percent of birds. Of 6,391 species of flowering plants recorded in Nepal, 399 are endemic. Among the 399 endemic flowering plants in Nepal, 63 percent are from the high mountains, 38 percent from the mid hills, and 5

percent from the Terai and Siwaliks. Similarly, the central region contains 66 percent of the total endemic species followed by western (32 percent) and eastern regions (29 percent). Nepal's wildlife belong to the Palaearctic and Indo-Malayan realms. The 136 ecosystems is confined to 11 bio-climatic zones and 9 eco-regions that are defined by ecological features, climate and plant and animal communities. The endemic fauna are: Himalayan field mouse, spiny babbler, Nepali kalij, 14 herpetofauna, and six types of fishes. Wildlife also include like endangered animals like the Royal Bengal tiger and the one-horned rhinoceros. Nepal is home 850 species of birds and more than half of these are found in the Kathmandu Valley. The natural resources of Nepal are water, hydropower, scenic beauty, quartz, timber, lignite, copper, cobalt and iron ore. Vast expanse of land in the country is used for agriculture with about 16 percent of total arable land.

Of the total number of species found globally, 3.96 percent mammals, 3.72 percent butterflies and 8.9 percent of birds. Wildlife of Nepal is officially classified into two main categories: common and protected. The common category lists such species as common leopard, spotted deer, Himalayan tahr, blue sheep and others. These species are commonly seen in the wild. The protected species include 26 mammals, nine birds and three reptiles. These rare animals are confined to their prime habitats.

**Wildlife:** Please click [Protected Species](#) for details. The endemic fauna are: Himalayan field mouse, spiny babbler, Nepali kalij, 14 herpetofauna, and six types of fishes.

**Mammals:** Nepal has 185 species of mammals found in various parts of the country. Found in Nepal's dense Terai jungles are exotic animals like the Asiatic elephant, the one-horned rhinoceros, the Royal Bengal tiger among others. Also found here are the leopard, monkey, langur, hyena, jackal, wild boar, antelope, wild cat, wolf, sloth bear, chital or spotted deer and barking deer. Wild buffalo locally called "Arna" is found in the Koshi Tappu region. The western Terai jungles of Suklaphanta is home of the of swamp deer, while the endangered blackbucks are found in the Bardia region. Nepal Government has made an effort to preserve blackbucks by declaring an area of 15.95 sq. km. in Bardia as Blackbuck Conservation Area.

Nepal even has its own variety of dolphins found in the fresh waters of Narayani and Karnali rivers. The Himalayan region is also home to the elusive snow leopard and the red panda. Red panda, a rare sight because of its shy nature, may be found from Langtang region to Kanchenjunga region. Other mammals that live in high altitude areas are yak, blue sheep, Himalayan tahr and musk deer. While otters are found in the Rara region north west, the Dhorpatan hunting grounds is home of the blue sheep and Himalayan tahr.

**Reptiles:** Nepal has two indigenous species of crocodile: the fish eating gharial with the long narrow snout and the marsh mugger which is omnivorous, eating anything it can catch. A very successful breeding project has brought the gharial back from extinction. Some of the snakes found in Nepal are: cobras, kraits, vipers and the Indian python. Other reptiles found in the country are turtles and monitor lizards.

Some of these reptiles can be seen in the Chitwan National Park and Bardia National Park.

**Birds:** Nepal has more than 850 recorded species of birds. Amazingly, half of these birds can be seen in and around the Kathmandu valley alone. The hills around the valley especially Nagarjun, Godavari and Phulchowki are popular birding areas. Phulchowki at 2,760 m boasts about 90 bird species including the endemic spiny babbler, which was thought to be extinct until it was spotted in Nepal. Another rare species of bird, the red-headed trogon, was also sighted here in April 2000.

National parks like Chitwan and Bardia harbor a wide variety of birds too. In Chitwan, endangered vultures are being protected from contaminated food by establishing "Vulture Restaurant" which feeds them safe carcasses. The Koshi Tappu region is home to a large species of resident and migratory birds. It has about 26 varieties of ducks alone. About 485 species have been sighted here, including black ibis, honey kites, ospreys, black headed orioles, peregrine falcon, partridges, ruddy shelduck, storks, vultures and eagles among others. In the higher Himalayan region are found different species of the raptors and birds of prey. Nepal's national bird, the Danphe or impeyen pheasant, is also found in the Himalayan region. A rare bird known as jerdon's baza was sighted in Nepal. Over the past few years a conservation group has worked specifically in the Lumbini area to conserve the sarus crane.

**For more information about Nepal's wildlife,**

Please visit: <http://www.dnpwc.gov.np/>

(official web site of the Department of National Parks & Wildlife Conservation, Ministry of Forests & Soil Conservation).

**Plants:** Of the total number of species found globally, Nepal possesses 2.80 percent plants. Record from 2006 shows that Nepal has 6,391 flowering plant species, representing 1,590 genera and 231 families. Nepal's share of flowering plant species is 2.76 percent of the global total compared to earlier records of 2.36 percent. Nepal's share of pteridophytes is 5.15 percent compared to earlier records of 4.45 percent.

There are 2,532 species of vascular plants represented by 1,034 genera and 199 families in the protected sites. Some 130 endemic species are found in the protected sites.

**For ecology and vegetation purpose Nepal could be divided into four floristic regions i.e.**

(a) western

(b) north-western

(c) central, and

(d) eastern, and bio-climatically these are broken down into twenty regions from humid tropical climate to the arid, alpine regions. There are 399 endemic flowering plants in Nepal of which about 63 percent are from the high mountains, 38 percent from the mid hills, and only 5 percent from the Terai and Siwaliks. Similarly, the central region contains 66 percent of the total endemic species followed by 32



percent in the western and 29 percent in the eastern regions.

**Medicinal Plants:** The Himalayas are famous for medicinal plants and have even been mentioned in the Aurveda. Many of the herbs and plants found in the Himlayas are used in traditional healing systems like Ayurvedic, Homoeopathic, Amchi etc. Some of these plants are even used for allopathic medicine. Medicinal plants are abundantly found in: the Terai region of Nawalparasi, Chitwan, Bardia, Dhanusha, mid hill region of Makhwanpur, Syangja, Kaski, Lamjung, Dolakha, Parvat, Ilam, Ramechhap, Nuwakot, and the Himalayan region of Dolpa, Mugu, Humla, Jumla, Manang, Mustang and Solukhumbu.

**Orchids:** In ancient Rome, Theophrastus, a student of Plato, was intrigued by the sight of a plant with a pair of roots. Orchis was the name he gave them, the Greek word for testicles. Worldwide, there are some 500 to 600 genera and some 20,000 to 35,000 names, the largest of all plant families, and out of this, Nepal has 57 genera (27 Terrestrials and 30 Epiphytic) with a few Lithophytes. Nepal is endowed with an incredible variety of orchids scattered across the country. Dedrobium is the largest species, followed by Habenaria and Bulbophyllum. Anthogonium, Hemipilia and Lusia are some of the other varieties amongst the nearly two dozen single species families.

**For more information about Nepal's plant resources,**

Please visit: <http://www.dpr.gov.np/>

(official web site of the Department of Plant Resources, Ministry of Forests & Soil Conservation).

**Culture:** Customs and traditions differ from one part of Nepal to another. A conglomeration lies in capital city Kathmandu where cultures are blending to form a national identity. Kathmandu Valley has served as the country's cultural metropolis since the unification of Nepal in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. A prominent factor in a Nepali's everyday life is religion. Adding color to the lives of Nepalis are festivals the year round which they celebrate with much pomp and joy. Food plays an important role in the celebration of these festivals.

**Religion:** Nepal was declared a secular country by the Parliament on May 18, 2006. Religions practiced in Nepal are: Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Jainism, Sikhism, Bon, ancestor worship and animism. The majority of Nepalis are either Hindus or Buddhism. The two have co-existed in harmony through centuries.

Buddha is widely worshipped by both Buddhists and Hindus of Nepal. The five Dhyani Buddhas; Vairochana, Akshobhaya, Rathasambhava, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi, represent the five basic elements: earth, fire, water, air and ether. Buddhist philosophy conceives these deities to be the manifestations of Sunya or absolute void. Mahakaala and Bajrayogini are Vajrayana Buddhist deities worshipped by Hindus as well.

Hindu Nepalis worship the ancient Vedic gods. Bramha the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Shiva the Destroyer, are worshipped as the Supreme Hindu Trinity. People pray to the Shiva Linga or the phallic symbol of Lord Shiva in most Shiva

temples. Shakti, the dynamic element in the female counterpart of Shiva, is highly revered and feared. Mahadevi, Mahakali, Bhagabati, Ishwari are some of the names given. Kumari, the Virgin Goddess, also represents Shakti. Other popular deities are Ganesh for luck, Saraswati for knowledge, Lakshmi for wealth and Hanuman for protection. Krishna, believed to be the human incarnation of Lord Vishnu is also worshipped widely. Hindu holy scripts Bhagawat Gita, Ramayan and Mahabharat are widely read in Nepal. Vedas, Upanishads and other holy scriptures are read by well learned Brahmin Pundits during special occasions.

**Customs:** The diversity in Nepal in terms of ethnicity again makes room for various sets of customs. Most of these customs go back to the Hindu, Buddhist or other religious traditions. Among them, the rules of marriage are particularly interesting. Traditional marriages call for deals arranged by parents after the boy or girl come of age.

Nepalis do not eat beef. There are several reasons for this, one being that the Hindus worship cow. Cow is also the national animal of Nepal. Another interesting concept among Nepalis is division of pure and impure. "Jutho" referring to food or material touched by another's mouth directly or indirectly, is considered impure by Nepalis. Nepalis consider cow dung to be pure for cleansing purposes. During menstruation women are considered impure and hence, are kept in seclusion until their fourth day purification bath. Nepal is a patriarchal society. Men usually go out to work while women are homemakers. However, in cities, roles can differ. Most Nepalis abide by the caste system in living habits and marriage. Rural Nepal is mostly agrarian, while some aspects of urban life carry glitz and glamour of the ultra-modern world.

**Food:** Nepal does not have a distinct cooking style. However, food habits differ depending on the region. Nepali food has been influenced by Indian and Tibetan styles of cooking. Authentic Nepali taste is found in Newari and Thakai cuisines. Most Nepalis do not use cutlery but eat with their right hand. The regular Nepali meal is dal (lentil soup), bhat (boiled rice) and tarkari (curried vegetables), often accompanied by achar (pickle). Curried meat is very popular, but is saved for special occasions, as it is relatively more expensive. Momos (steamed or fried dumplings) deserve a mention as one of the most popular snack among Nepalis. Rotis (flat bread) and dhedo (boiled flour) also make meals in some homes.

**Trekking:** That one in four visitors to Nepal go trekking should say something about the popularity of this activity in the Himalayan country. Most treks go through altitudes between 1,000 and 4,000 meters, while some popular parts reach over 5,000 meters. It's not only the stunning landscapes on the trail that captivate the trekkers but also the people from different ethnic groups with whom they meet on the way – a rare opportunity to experience Nepal's rich cultural diversity. And what better way than walking to see and experience it. The most popular trekking routes have traditionally been the Everest, Annapurna and Langtang regions. But now the Kanchenjunga in the extreme east and Dolpo in northwest Nepal are gaining ground as new popular destinations. More recently, the government has developed a number of heritage trails in different parts of the country where you can combine a



trek with a peek into the cultures of the local communities. And for those with the time and the stamina, there is The Great Himalayan Trail that stretches 1,700 km from Kanchenjunga in the east to Humla in the west – a trek that will take months to accomplish. All trekkers are required to obtain the TIMS card before embarking on their trip. To trek in protected areas region one must acquire the entry permit by paying Entry Fees to enter the particular National Park or Protected Area. To get access to the areas restricted by the Government of Nepal, one must acquire the Trekking Permit to the area.

Please click for information on: TIMS card, [ENTRANCE FEES TO NATIONAL PARKS](#) and [Trekking Permit to Restricted Areas](#).

**Mountaineering:** It was mountaineering that first opened up Nepal to the outside world. Of the world's 14 highest peaks above 8,000 m, eight of them crown Nepal's north, including the highest Mt. Everest. Not surprisingly, the fascination of scaling these physically demanding peaks draws crowds of visitors from abroad year after year without let up. **The mountains are open for climbing in all the four climbing seasons:**

- 1 spring (March-May),
- 2 summer (June-August),
- 3 autumn (September-November) and
- 4 winter (December-February).

The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation issues permits for the bigger mountains while the Nepal Mountaineering Association issues permits for the smaller trekking peaks between 5,587 m and 6,654 m. Please click for [Mountaineering Royalty](#).

**Safari:** The tropical jungles of Nepal's Terai preserve some of the best wildlife habitats of South Asia. Some of the wildlife attractions of Nepal's jungles include the rare one-horned rhinoceros, the elusive Royal Bengal tiger, snow leopard, red panda and musk deer. Jungle safaris can be enjoyed on elephant back or in jeeps at Chitwan National Park, Bardia National Park, Parsa Wildlife Reserve and Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, all located in the Terai. The national parks provide a wide range of tourist facilities in and around the areas.

## **Travel Information to Nepal:**

**Visa** can be obtained on arrival at **the Tribhuvan International Airport**, Kathmandu, at border entry points in Kakadvitta, Birgunj, Bhairahawa, Nepalgunj, Gaddachowki on Nepal-India border and Kodari on Nepal-China border. Visa can also be obtained at the nearest Nepal Embassy or Diplomatic Mission. Visa can also be obtained (renewal purposes) at Department of Immigration, Kalikasthan, Kathmandu. A valid passport and one passport -size photo with a light background is required. Immigration Department has not specified the size of the passport-size photo. Visa can be obtained only through payment of cash in the following currency: Euro, Swiss Franc, Pound Sterling, US Dollar, Australian Dollar, Canadian

Dollar, Hong Kong Dollar, Singapore Dollar and Japanese Yen. Credit card, Indian currency and Nepali currency are not accepted as payment of visa fee. **a. Tourist**

## Visa

Visa Facility	Duration	Fee
Multiple entry	15 days	US\$ 25
Multiple entry	30 days	US\$ 40
Multiple entry	90 days	US\$ 100

## b. Gratis (Free) Visa

### Useful Tips:

- 5 A travel insurance policy that covers medical treatment is recommended for all tourists.
- 6 Similarly, we recommend you to make sure that the insurance covers activities such as trekking, rafting etc. that you will be undertaking during your stay in Nepal
- 7 Getting special vaccinations are not necessary when visiting Nepal.
- 8 We still recommend that you consult with your physician regarding special immunizing against any tropical disease.
- 9 It may be a good idea to get a complete check up before departure.
- 10 We recommend that you undertake training programs to be physically fit if you plan to go high-altitude trekking or mountaineering when you're visiting Nepal.
- 11 Please read up on altitude sickness (AMS), diarrhea, Giardia, Dysentery, Cholera, Hepatitis, Rabies, Typhoid, Tetanus, Meningitis, Diphtheria, Malaria and HIV/ AIDS. Information and little precautions can often save lives.
- 12 Please make sure that food is thoroughly cooked and served hot when eating out.
- 13 Please make sure that salads and fruits are washed with purified water or peeled when eating out.
- 14 Beware of food that has been kept out in the open for long.
- 15 Always make sure that your water is clean by opting for boiled and then cooled water, treated water or sealed water from reputed brand.
- 16 Always carry a bottle of water when trekking or venturing off away from the city/ town.
- 17 Do not walk bare feet on damp mud and grass in unknown areas.
- 18 Please do not swim in lakes and water bodies, especially where depth and vegetation are not known.
- 19 Always carry and use mosquito repellent when in Terai region or during summers.
- 20 Please have a handy medical first aid kit ready for any situation.

**Medical Kit:** A simple but adequate medical kit can be very useful while traveling. The following items are recommended: Aspirin or Panadol, for pain or fever; Antihistamine, as a decongestant for colds, allergies and to help prevent motion sickness; Antibiotics, useful if traveling off beaten track but they must be prescribed; Kaolin preparation (Pepto-Bismol), Imodium or Lomotil, for upset stomach; Rehydration mixture – for treatment of severe diarrhea; Antiseptic, mercurochrome

and antibiotic powder or similar dry spray- for cuts and grazes.

Other things to be included are: Calamine lotion to ease irritation from bites or stings; bandages and band aids for minor injuries; scissors, tweezers, thermometer, insect repellent, sun block lotions, chopsticks, water purification tablets, throat lozenges, moleskin, Sulamyd 10 percent eye drops, paracetamol and antacid tablets.

**Responsible Tourism:** Please be a responsible tourist. Like someone said, we request you to, "Leave only footprints, and take only photographs."

- 21 Use designated routes, campsites and resting places to reduce trampling and other negative environmental impacts.
- 22 Respect local culture and traditions, use homestays, locally owned hotels/ lodges or campsites as much as possible to support the local livelihood.
- 23 Avoid/ minimize using firewood. Use common space for heating. Opt for alternatives to minimize deforestation.
- 24 Maintain cleanliness and hygiene. Use the litter box locally available. Carry back your own garbage while traveling through ecologically sensitive areas.
- 25 Encourage to place mobile toilets at a considerable distance from sources of water, river banks and springs while camping along the river sides.
- 26 Use the services of local guides and porters as much as possible to explore more about local environment and culture.
- 27 Money spent here will contribute directly to the local livelihood, women's empowerment and environmental conservation.

Before you begin your journey we request you to abide by the above guidelines in order to safeguard the nature and culture of the area and be a responsible tourist.