

CAMPING TREK

Pikey Peak // Foothills

NEPAL



ITINERARY AND INFORMATION

OVERVIEW

Imagine camping in serene forests, beside lakes, and on hilltops where you can watch the sunrise from your tent, tea in hand, with the summit of Everest looming in the distance. On a clear day atop Pikey Peak, you are treated to a breathtaking panorama of the entire Himalayan range, stretching across Nepal.

The trek has beautiful views, cuddles with baby goats, and a visit to Monastery from Junbesi, one of the oldest in the region.

Our Pikey Peak Trek follows a less-travelled path, offered by only two operators in all of Nepal. Our adventure is designed to provide an intimate experience with nature, where you'll rarely encounter other people (in fact we didn't for three days last year!).

This route was meticulously planned by Surrender, one of our local Nepalese guides. It takes you along yak trails and through the rolling foothills with great camp locations.

From the start of our trek, we leave the village of Phaphlu behind. As we commence our first ascent, we bid farewell to any villages and welcome the tranquillity of remote camping.

distance. On a clear day atop Pikey Peak, you are treated to a breathtaking panorama of the entire Himalayan range, stretching across Nepal. This trek is renowned for offering the "best views of Everest", echoed by the legendary Sir Edmund Hillary. Its off-the-beaten-path nature ensures a peaceful journey, with nights spent in the comfort of our campsites, complete with delicious meals in the dining tent prepared by your guides and a full team of 19 porters!

HIGHLIGHTS

Explore the foothills of the world's highest mountain range, with incredible views of Everest and spectacular east-west vistas of the Himalayan range

Enjoy tea house accommodation and camping with three local Nepalese-style meals daily

Visit local Buddhist Monasteries and be absorbed by the lived reality of this ancient faith

Take in the view of Mount Everest from Pikey
Peak

Trek on secluded trails far from the tourist crowds

Experience a true luxury camping experience with wonderful service

All bookended with a 4-star hotel stay in Kathmandu at the start and end of your trip



DETAILS

Destination: Nepal

Number of days: 11

Accommodation: Kathmandu Guest House, tea houses

Starting point: Kathmandu

Ending point: Kathmandu

Max elevation: 4080m

Total days trekking: 6

Trekking per day: Between 5-8 hours

Season: October

Grade: Challenging

Meals: Bed and breakfast in Kathmandu, all

meals on trek

Travel: Includes internal flight to Paphlu





ABOUT

This trek is a unique, camping-style adventure that delves into the lush foothills beneath the majestic views of Mount Everest.

Each day, we wake around 6:30 a.m. to the sunrise outside our tent, greeted by our local team with a delightful 'wake up tea.' The service is great, and the team goes above and beyond to assist everyone. Our days include a delicious breakfast (we have a group chef!) and all meals offer variety. We usually begin trekking by 8 a.m. (depending on the day), with stops for rest and lunch along the way.

Some days are longer or shorter than others, but this trek is truly about being immersed in the foothills and away from the crowds. We enjoy tea in the afternoons, play card games in the dining tent, and really disconnect from the hustle of life. This trip is ideal if you aim to reach high peaks and be immersed in nature and culture. Visiting monasteries and not just conquering the trek, but being present in its beauty and among the people, is what makes this journey special.



AT A GLANCE

A compulsory pre-trekking briefing is held on Day 2 of your trip at Kathmandu Guest House. Please see itinerary for further details.

Note: Pikey Peak Trek is a circuit trek in a clockwise direction.

| Day 1:

Arrival date o/n at Kathmandu Guest House

| Day 2:

Sight-seeing in Kathmandu and Preparation Day to begin acclimatisation

| Day 3:

Fly to Phaphlu

| Day 4:

Trek to Tenkharka

| Day 5:

Trek to Suke Pokhari

| Day 6:

Ascent of Pikey Peak

| Day 7:

Trek to Junbesi

| Day 8:

Visit Thupten Choling Monastery

| Day 9:

Trek back to Phaphlu

I Day 10

Return flight to Kathmandu

| Day 11:

Departure from Kathmandu



Upon your arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport, you'll be greeted by one of our friendly team members – often it's Mango (wait until you see how charming he is!). He'll escort you to The Kathmandu Guest House in Thamel in the comfort of a private vehicle. Don't worry if your flight lands late at night; we'll be there to welcome you, no matter the hour. The drive to the hotel is typically around 35 minutes, depending on traffic.

Once at the hotel, you'll find the check-in process a breeze. Settle into your private room and let the weariness of your flight dissolve into the coziness and comfort awaiting you.

For important details on visas and helpful tips for your flight arrival, please refer to the essential information we've provided.

- Included: Airport pick-up (day one only) and night's accommodation at Kathmandu at Kathmandu Guest House (private room)
- Elevation: Kathmandu (1,420m)

Nepal Visa:

While obtaining a visa prior to your trip is an option, acquiring it upon arrival at passport control is generally more convenient.

Visa fees, subject to change, are typically AUD 40 for 15 days, AUD 60 for 30 days, and AUD 150 for 3 months. Multiple currencies are accepted; however, it is advisable to carry Australian dollars in denominations up to \$100 to accommodate any price variations.

Visa Application Form:

• Ensure you complete the online visa application form before your trip. **Download it here** and bring a printed copy for presentation upon arrival.

Navigating Kathmandu Airport:

- Retain your boarding pass and luggage sticker as they may be needed at passport control and baggage reclaim.
- Upon disembarking, proceed to the Visa desk on the left inside the terminal to pay for your visa. Following visa issuance, head to the customs desk, then down the elevator to a security check before moving on to baggage claim.
- Baggage trolleys are available. Be cautious of personnel offering luggage assistance as they will expect a tip; it is recommended to decline this service.
- Upon exiting the terminal, look for a sign reading "Women Want Adventure/Kathmandu Guest House". Hotel representatives will meet you regardless of arrival time. Note: It is best to handle your own luggage.

Preparing Your Documents:

- Verify that your passport is valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of your return from Nepal.
- Carry 2-3 passport-sized photographs with a light background, which may be necessary for various services throughout your trip, such as a SIM card purchase.

Monday matters:

There is an ATM inside Kathmandu Guest House, along with many currency exchange centers in the streets if you need to exchange larger rupee notes, for smaller denominations for your trekking cash.

Kathmandu Valley Sightseeing (1,420m) and trek Preparation Day Kathmandu is a wonderful mix of the ancient alongside the modern. Crowded, busy streets, cars, motorbikes, and buses thread their way between ancient temples, crumbling shrines and modern offices, as picturesque palaces slowly sag into dereliction and Buddhist stupas gaze over the bustling scene with their all-seeing eyes. Although a crowded, noisy, and polluted city, it is also friendly, fascinating and vibrant.

Today is free time for you to explore and enjoy sight-seeing in your own time. Join up with other women on the trip, or enjoy experiencing these sites individually.

- Pashupatinath Nepal's largest Hindu Temple, dedicated to Shiva, is located on the Bagmati River's banks. Here, you can admire finely carved Hindu deities and a series of Shiva-Lingas. The complex, with its golden hood atop the main Temple, is striking. Witnessing a Hindu death ritual at Pashupati Aryaghat offers a unique, memorable cultural experience.
- **Boudhanath** A significant religious site for Tibetan Buddhists in Nepal, it was a key shrine on the ancient Indo-China trade route. Even today, monks in saffron robes perform daily circumambulations around Boudhanath, with prayer flags stretching from the dome's pinnacle to its base. As the heart of Tibetan culture in Nepal, Boudhanath stands as a truly special place.
- **Durbar Square** Situated before the old royal palace of the former Kathmandu Kingdom, its exceptional wooden and stone craftsmanship make it a notable attraction. The stone-paved streets and pagoda-style temples showcasing Hindu deities highlight the cultural richness and fine craftsmanship of ancient and medieval Nepal at Kathmandu Durbar Square.
- Swayambhunath Perched atop a hill in the Kathmandu Valley, the ancient complex houses a stupa and several temples. Celebrating the 'Self-Created' essence of the valley, the Buddha's eyes painted on the stupa offer an eternal vigil. As one of Nepal's oldest religious sites and the second-most sacred in Tibetan Buddhism after Boudhanath, Swayambhunath offers a genuine glimpse into one of the world's most profound and beautiful faiths.



EXPLORE

Exploring Kathmandu's Streets in Thamel

Your initial exploration outside the Kathmandu Guest House is filled with bustling activity and delightful chaos. It can sometimes feel a little overwhelming so, ensure a stress-free exploration by:

Utilising offline maps via Google Maps or Maps Me. It is usually best to purchase a SIM card.

<u>Thamel</u> is the suburb in which we stay at the hotel for reference when you are navigating or looking up things to do.

SIM Card

An NCELL SIM card will ensure you stay connected, facilitating easy coordination with the group and staying in touch. You can pick this up with a 4-minute walk from the hotel. Ask reception for directions.

Requirements for a SIM card: Passport and 2 passport photos



EATING OUT

Thamel Restaurants and Café Recommendations - Women Want Adventure recommendations!



Coffee:

- Himalayan Java
- <u>Himalayan Arabica Beans</u>
- Lunch:
- Loving Heat Vegan Restaurant
- Forest & Plate
- Nepal Connections

Lunch/ dinner:

- Gaia Restaurant & Coffee Shop (gaia-restaurant.com)
- Fire And Ice Pizzeria
- Home Rosemary Kitchen
- Roadhouse Cafe Thermal
- Dinner Menu Yala Cafe
- OR2K

Additional activities you may consider:

- Chandragiri Hills Cable Car
- Half Day Cooking Class in Thamel

BREIFING

Location: Kathmandu Guest House - 4pm inside restaurant area (near the tea station)

Note: Please be mindful other WWA groups may be having their trip briefings at the same time in this area. Be sure to find your correct group!

In the evening, we'll meet as a group at Kathmandu Guest House for our pre-trek briefing with the Guiding Team. The briefing will be approximately 1 hour in duration.

- Opportunity to meet the other women
- Overview of the Pikey Peak itinerary
- Cross-check of required gear and clothing
- Distribution of duffle bags to place additional items not carried in your daypack
- Explanation of what is best to bring and what to leave at the hotel
- Outline of inherent risks of the trip and our emergency procedures
- Explanation of best hygiene practices while trekking
- Forecast weather conditions
- Confirmation of pick-up times for the following morning to drive to the domestic airport (usually morning)
- Opportunity to ask questions

What's included:

- Included: Hotel in Kathmandu (private room)
- Elevation: Kathmandu (1,420m)
- Meals: Hotel breakfast, complimentary tea at briefing

DAY 03

Fly to Phaplu

Accommodation:
 Mountain tea house accommodation (twin share)

Meals: B, L, DPhaphlu Altitude: 2413m

Distance: 2-3 km



Today, we check out of our hotel in Thamel and are picked up in the morning for a drive to the domestic airport, approximately a 35-minute journey. Once at the airport, be aware that planes can depart at unusual times (despite the ticket time), so be prepared to either wait at the airport or leave earlier. Bring your snacks, water and book in your day pack. Your host, along with airport staff, will assist you. This is due to the varying weather conditions between Kathmandu and Phaphlu. If there is a favourable weather window, we will promptly depart! The flight lasts about 45 minutes on a small 15-seater plane. It is VERY exciting!!!

You will be awestruck by the magnificent mountains visible from the air before you even start your trek. Upon landing, it's just a 5-minute walk from the airport strip to our Tea House where lunch awaits, along with the trekking porters, sherpas, and guides (who do not accompany us on the plane). The team will great you at the airport on your arrival and help you carry the duffle bags of your gear to the Tea House. Phaphlu is situated at an altitude of approximately 2413 meters.

After lunch, we will settle into the Tea House and take a leisurely stroll around the village, visiting the monastery and gardens down the road. This offers a chance to explore this beautiful, remote village and its mountainous surroundings. It's advisable to rest on this day as the flight's landing time can vary due to weather conditions.

In the afternoon, dinner will be served in the Tea House. You'll notice the team setting up camp kitchen tents in the yard, giving you a glimpse of the incredible effort they put in to ensure the group's comfort.

Tips:

- 1. You can take water on the plane in your water bottle.
- 2. Please keep your passport with you at all times.
- 3. Fill up your water bottles and bladders the night prior at the Tea House so you're ready to leave for trekking the following morning.

Today, you will awaken to the true meaning of "wake up tea." Around 6:30 am, your guides will bring hot tea to your rooms as a delightful wake-up call, preparing you for the day ahead. After breakfast at the Tea House, we embark on our trek. The journey begins with a descent into the valley. It's a steep hike down through pine forests and paddy fields. After traveling approximately two kilometers (about an hour), we reach the Solu Khola river. Here, we follow a newly established road for a short time before veering left onto a small trail leading up to the village of Boldok on single narrow trail. Beyond Boldok, the last village we'll see for a few days, we ascend steeply and stop for a simple yet hearty lunch. Be sure to pat the

The trail from here winds steeply through pine forests on various yak and animal trails. These paths are uneven and occasionally off-track, with mud in places. Between the trees, you'll catch stunning glimpses of the lush Phaplu Valley, with the majestic Mount Numbur and Gaurishankar - named after the Hindu goddess Gauri and her consort Shankar - to the north.

After another 3-4 hours, our campsite atop the ridge awaits, offering your first views of the magnificent Everest.

Each afternoon around 4 pm, depending on our setup time and weather, tea and coffee is served. The team will set up your tents (a welcome luxury!). At camp, there's always bustling activity as the chefs and their assistants prepare your dining tent and kitchen. In the evening, join the group in the dining tent for some card games, enjoying soup, dinner, and often a delectable surprise dessert!

Tips:

goats along the way!

- 1. Stay well-hydrated throughout the day and remember to take your electrolytes.
- 2. Plenty of water is available, and the team will provide boiling water for refilling water bladders and bottles. Always carry 2L with you and fill up the night prior!



DAY 04

Trek to Tenkharka

- Mountain Camping: (Twin-share tent)
- Meals: B, L, D
- Tenkharka Altitude: Approx. 3200m
- Total Ascent: 1087m
- Total Decent: 327Distance: 11km
- Hours on Trail: 6-7
 - hours

Trek to Suke Pokhari

 Mountain Camping: (Twin-share tent)

• Meals: B, L, D

• Suke Pokhari Altitude: 3600m

Total Ascent: 530mTotal Decent: 100mDistance: 5.5-6km

• Hours on Trail: 3-4 hrs



The following morning, we'll rise early to witness the first morning rays illuminating the Himalayas. Savor tea and coffee served right in your tent while you take in the breathtaking surroundings. The team will also bring over warm "washing water" to wash your hands and face. After a hearty breakfast, we start the day with a gradual ascent along the ridge. Our path winds through pine forests, interspersed with rhododendron bushes and open meadows. Although it's a relatively easier and shorter day, we are still ascending, so you might feel the effects of altitude.

We'll reach our campsite early in the afternoon, at a location traditionally used by local herders for evening shelter. The area is dotted with a few dried-out lakes, which only hold water during the monsoon season. Once at the camp, we'll gather for lunch, though light snacks will be available along the way. Please bring your own bars and nibbles for additional sustenance. The afternoon is yours to explore, read, or even help set up the campfire – the sooner we have it ready, the more enjoyable our evening will be!

Tips:

- 1. If you find water in the lakes, please refrain from swimming as these are sacred sites.
- 2. Please have your duffle bags ready at breakfast time for your porters as they need to prepare the packs and begin walking prior to the group.



Ascent of Pikey Peak

Mountain Camping: Twin-share tent)

Meals: B, L, D

Pikey Peak Altitude: 4080m

Pamu Danda Camp Altitude: 3500m Total Ascent: 580m Distance: 14-15km Hours on Trail: 5-6 hrs



We have an early start today at 4:30 am for our ascent of Pikey Peak! Prepare for a 3-hour journey along a trail of stone steps. Don't forget to bring your head torch and spare batteries. We depart early to catch the spectacular sunrise over the Himalayan range – the pink skies are truly a sight to behold! As we gradually gain altitude, it's likely you'll feel the effects of the altitude, but we will ensure plenty of short breaks to catch our breath and enjoy the panoramic views. These include Mount Everest and Lhotse, along with Makalu and Kanchenjunga to the east, among other iconic peaks. The path to Pikey Peak can be slippery and wet, especially on the stone steps from the back ridge line (we follow yak trails here), as the sun hasn't risen yet to dry the path, so please tread carefully.

After soaking in the stunning Himalayan views and enjoying a simple breakfast with hot coffee at the summit, we begin our descent towards Jase Bhanjyang, lasting a couple of hours.

Our campsite for the night is situated at an altitude of 3,500 meters on the mountainside. A large meadow provides the perfect setting for our tents, with the surrounding green forest offering protection from the wind – an ideal spot for a campfire and sharing travel stories.

Please note: Today's itinerary is subject to change depending on weather and the group's pace. Sometimes, we may camp further up on another mountain ridge. Your guides will keep you informed.



Trek to Junbesi

- Mountain Camping: Twin-share tent
- Meals: B, L, D
- Junbesi Altitude: 2685m
- Total Descent: 1010m
- Total Ascent: 280m
- **Distance:** 13km approx
- Hours on Trail: 5.5 hrs

Today, we begin our descent from the foothills, embarking on a picturesque forest trail towards Junbesi Village. The day starts with a slight ascent up the mountainside before descending into the forest. This approximately 5.5-hour journey involves a steep descent on some loose rocky ground, but not before we ascend to about 3700 meters and then head down again. After we exit the forest, the trail widens, merging into a partially paved road and a broader path. Interestingly, this very trail is the one Sir Edmund Hillary trekked on during his famous Expedition to Everest!

By late afternoon, we'll reach a tea house location for lunch (late lunch so have your snacks handy on this day) and set up our tents on the grassy area. You'll be delighted to know that a hot shower is available (for a small tea house fee, usually 500 Rupees). Our local team will prepare amazing meals, offering a perfect opportunity to relax and enjoy the forest surroundings. In the evening, consider exploring the monastery in town for a serene end to the day.



DAY 08

Visit Thupten Choling Monastery

- Mountain Camping: Twin-share tent
- Meals: B, L, D
- Thupten Choling Monastery Altitude: 3000m
- **Distance:** 6km approx.
- Hours on Trail: 4 hours

Today is dedicated to exploring Thupten Choling Monastery. After a leisurely morning with breakfast, we'll prepare for a shorter day of hiking, allowing us time to soak in our surroundings and culture.

Our path to the monastery starts near the stu pa at the northern edge of the village, just where we camp. The trail ascends alongside Junbesi's stream, crosses it via a suspension bridge near Mopung's power plant, and then continues to a magnificent golden-topped stupa adorned with exquisite golden figures set against a blue backdrop. The journey to the monastery is a beautiful trek through an emerald evergreen forest and along a stream before trekking on the road. The path is somewhat steep, usually taking a bit more than an hour to reach the monastery. However, the trail's beauty invites a slower, more relaxed pace.

Upon arrival, the monastery greets visitors with its serene ambiance, reflecting the rich culture and traditions of the ethnic Sherpa community. Please remember to bring small denominations in Rupees for donations at the Monastery. We'll spend just over an hour there before descending for an hour back to our tents and tea house location for lunch and an afternoon of relaxation.





Trek back to Phaphlu

Mountain Tea
 House: Twin Share

Meals: B, L, DPhaplu Altitude:

2413m

Distance: 16kmHours on Trail: 4-4.5 hours We depart Junbesi around 8 am after breakfast, following two days of a more relaxed pace, to trek back to Phaphlu. It's a relatively easy village trail that meanders along the river, consisting mostly of descent with a final ascent towards Phaplu (what a splendid way to finish!). Along the way, keep an eye out for baby goats in the small villages we pass through.

The journey to Phaplu takes about 4 hours of trekking, stopping along the way for monring tea (bring your snacks). Our porters will advance ahead of the group to prepare lunch, ready for our arrival just after midday.

Tonight marks the conclusion of our trekking adventure with the local porters and guides (they will return to Kathmandu by bus with the gear, rather than flying), making this evening a special occasion for celebration. It's a great opportunity to buy them a beer and remember to provide tips to the team as per the guidelines in the Packing List PDF on the booking page.

Tonight, enjoy the comforts of the tea house, including a bed, hot shower, and a well-deserved good night's sleep. You've earned it!



DAY 10

Fly back to Kathmandu

- Hotel in Kathmandu (private room) with breakfast
- Farewell dinner at Kathmandu Guest House (including dinner and a drink)
- Flight Time: Approx. 45 minutes

After breakfast, we aim to catch the morning flight back to Kathmandu. However, a word of caution: flexibility is key when waiting for flights. The weather in Phaphlu can often be unpredictable, and clear conditions are necessary for safe take-offs and landings. It's not uncommon to experience delays at the Tea House, potentially waiting for 1-6 hours. In some cases, if a storm rolls in, alternate transportation via a roughly 11-hour car/bus ride back to Kathmandu may be required. This unpredictability is part of the adventure in Nepal and contributes to the overall challenging grading of this trek. Your guides will accompany you and your gear to the airport, assisting with tickets and guiding you to the gate.

Upon your return to Kathmandu, a member of our team will greet you at the baggage terminal and transport you back to the Kathmandu Guest House, typically arriving in the afternoon (depending on flight times).

Due to unpredictable weather, we advise booking your onward journey from Kathmandu at least 24 hours after the trek's conclusion. To allow for changes in the itinerary and weather-related alterations, we strongly recommend scheduling your departure flight 2 days post-trip.



Departure from Kathmandu

- Included: Hotel breakfast
- Airport transfers:
 Provided
 exclusively on this
 day

Today might be your last day in Nepal, unless you've personally decided to extend your adventure! Breakfast is included at the hotel, and we've arranged for airport drop-offs today only. To ensure a smooth departure, please make sure you have provided us your flight details so we can inform the hotel reception and your driver. Remember, it's essential to allow 3 hours from the hotel to the airport, factoring in traffic and time for customs – the roads can be unpredictable, and the airport may be bustling. Please don't forget to tip your driver too!

Tip: For a more comfortable wait at the airport: there's a lounge you can access for about \$35 AUD. It's a cozy upgrade from the general waiting area and well worth considering for some extra comfort.

Whether you're departing Nepal today or continuing your travels, you'll surely leave with a sense of accomplishment, camaraderie, and a treasure trove of memories from your journey to the roof of the world alongside like-minded, adventurous women.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Airport transfers on Day 1 and Day 11.
- A three-night stay at the Kathmandu Guest House (KGH) on a bed and breakfast basis in a private room.
- Return local airfare between Kathmandu (KTM) and Phaplu.
- All meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner), along with tea, coffee, and hot water during the camping segment.
- Two nights' accommodation in a local guesthouse during the trek, with twin-share rooms, located in Phaplu.
- Five days of camping services, which include all meals and accommodation in tents (two persons per tent).
- Services of an experienced, English-speaking, government-licensed guide, as well as Sherpas and porters. This includes all their expenses during the trek such as transfer, insurance, salary, meals, and accommodation.
- Provision of all communal camping equipment, including sleeping tents, sleeping mats, dining tents, chairs, tables, and a toilet tent.
- Seasonal fruits served after dinner during the trek.
- Coverage of the local guides/portage team's food, clothing, salary, and insurance.
- The required trekking permit.
- A special Women Want Adventure trekking gift.
- Duffle bag for your clothing items and sleeping bag while on Trek
- A farewell dinner and drink in Kathmandu.
- All applicable government charges.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Nepal Visa.
- International airfare to and from Kathmandu.
- Travel Insurance, which must cover helicopter evacuation, medical expenses, and trip cancellation charges. This is compulsory for all participants.
- Meals in Kathmandu, with the exception of breakfasts provided at the hotel and the farewell dinner.
- Personal expenses such as beverages, confectionaries, laundry, etc.
- Sleeping bag and sleeping bag liner.
- Compression sack for your sleeping bag
- Any extra meals you might desire, as well as additional porterage service, if required.
- Personal snacks (we recommend bringing these from home) refer to our packing list for suggestions.
- Additional meals outside of those specified in the itinerary, particularly at tea houses.
- All kinds of cold drinks like coke, fanta, beer, whisky, bottled water, etc.
- Expenses for Wi-Fi and charging your electronic devices.
- Charges for hot showers at the Tea Houses in Junbesi.
- Bottled water at Tea houses, if required.
- Entrance fees for monuments and sites during sightseeing excursions.
- Laundry services at the hotel in Kathmandu.
- Tips for your guides and porters we provide a tipping outline in the essentials information.
- Any other expenses or charges not mentioned in the "Trip Includes" list.

