



# COMMUNITY ACTION TREKS LTD

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## THE ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT

- Grade:** Demanding 
- Land-only duration:** 23 days Kathmandu – Kathmandu
- Trekking days:** 18
- Maximum altitude:** 5416m
- Minimum numbers:** Requires just 2 participants to guarantee these departures at the advertised price!
- Dates and prices:** Our latest dates and prices list is available at [www.catreks.com](http://www.catreks.com) or from the CAT office.



The Annapurna Circuit Trek is renowned as probably the best circular trek in the world, and rightly so!

Our route takes us around the huge Annapurna Massif and offers a challenging pass crossing, the most dramatic of picturesque lowland villages, high mountain scenery as well as a fascinating mix of local people and culture. We will trek through the jungles of the sub-tropics, through lush green paddy fields and on to alpine forests and semi-desert (similar to the landscape of Tibet), all the time offering stunning and superb views of the mighty Annapurnas.

We will also meet and be warmly welcomed by a fascinating mix of village people from many of the different ethnic groups of the area, both Hindu and Buddhist.



*Kimche, below Ghandrung (Andy Norris)*

• **Land-only prices:**

The cost of flights, in particular those to Nepal, are less predictable than they used to be. Airlines now request full payment upfront. As a result, we will quote you a land-only cost, and quote separately for the cheapest flights we can find at the time of your booking. We will, however, require full payment for the flights prior to booking them. If you prefer to search for alternative flights yourself, we can sell you the trek at the land-only price.

• **Important note – minimum numbers:**

Please note that this trip requires a minimum of 4 trekkers to run as a camping trip. If there are less than 4 clients on the trip, we reserve the right to use tea house accommodation. You will still have the services of a sirdar and porters and/or pack animals.

# OUTLINE ITINERARY

## Walking and journey times are approximate

- Day 1 Arrive Kathmandu**  
Transfer to hotel. Rest of the day free.
- Day 2 Free in Kathmandu**  
Explore the fascinating city of Kathmandu, with its temples and markets, or take an optional excursion (can be booked locally through our Nepal office) into the Kathmandu Valley.
- Day 3 Drive to Besisahar 5/6 hours, trek to Bhulbhule 840m 3½ hours walking**  
From the town of Besisahar, which is the capital of the Lamjung District, we walk upstream by way of a relatively level jeep track following the mighty Marsyangdi river. From Bhulbhule 840m we get our first good views of the mountains.
- Day 4 Bhulbhule to Syanje Village 1100m 6 hours walking**  
The trail continues northwards up the valley, crossing several suspension bridges and passing beautiful waterfalls, whilst above us tower the peaks of Lamjung, Manaslu and Peak 29. We pass through the village Bahundanda 1310m which supports a few shops and tea houses, and a chance for a welcome break after the long uphill slog before trekking to Syanje village 1100m where we camp.
- Day 5 Syanje Village to Tal 1700m 5 hours walking**  
We begin our day by climbing through rhododendron and pine forest where we will probably meet more local people as we continue on the trail. Tal means 'lake' and the wide valley was indeed once a lake. Just north of the village is a spectacular waterfall and it may offer you the chance of a powerful but refreshing shower.
- Day 6 Tal to Bagarchap 2164m 6 hours walking**  
After leaving Tal we cross a large bridge to the village of Dharapani 1960m. Our climb continues through forests to the delightful village of Bagarchap, which is surrounded by peach and apple trees with small streams meandering through it. It is the first village on the trek with a strong Tibetan flavour in its architecture and layout.
- Day 7 Bagarchap to Chame 2670m 6 hours walking**  
The trail now bears west, Manaslu forming a splendid backdrop and Annapurna II 7039m appearing occasionally to the south. As we continue to Chame through fine forests of pine and fir, views of the Annapurna improve dramatically. Chame is the district headquarters of Manang and as such has electricity, a telephone office and well stocked shops. There are mineral hot springs here but be careful; the water is piping hot, please do not pollute it with shampoo or soap.
- Day 8 Chame to Pisang 3200m 5/6 hours walking**  
Throughout the day we cross the river several times as we pass through the narrow, steep sided gorges. Nearing the village of Pisang, as we climb to the ridge, the path at times is built into the cliff face on wooden piers. We enjoy our first views of the Manang Valley, a wide U-shaped valley dramatically located between two lines of snow peaks. Pisang has changed little over the centuries and has a very mediaeval atmosphere. Across the valley stands Annapurna II, seemingly close enough to touch, with Pisang Peak rising behind.
- Day 9 Trek to Manang 3540m 5 hours walking**  
Descending to the broad forested valley floor, we follow the trail through the flat valley, passing a small grass airstrip: we cross the river once again to Braga. This is a village of about 250 houses stacked on top of each other, flat roofs forming verandas. We shall visit the Braga Monastery, believed to be at least 500 years old, the largest in the district which houses thankas and manuscripts as well as an outstanding display of over a hundred terracotta images that line the walls. Don't forget to take your shoes off before entering. From here it is only a short walk to Manang.
- Day 10 Manang acclimatisation day**  
A necessary day for rest and acclimatisation and a chance to explore Manang, a village of about 550 flat roofed houses which is picturesquely set amongst spectacular scenery; Annapurna II 7937m, Annapurna III 7555m, Gangapurna 7455m to the south; Tilicho 7134m and the grand barrier to the west; Chulu West 6419m and Chulu East 6584m to the north and the glacial lake below. You could perhaps use today to revisit Braga Monastery, either early morning or late afternoon and visit the very atmospheric main temple. At these times, when the monks are worshipping, the building is filled with the fragrance of burning juniper. As an alternative there is a walk across the river from Manang around the lake below the Gangapurna glacier. Our Sirdar / guides will direct you. Acclimatisation days are a very important aspect trekking and will undoubtedly assist with the success, as well as adding to the enjoyment of the trek.
- Day 11 Trek to Letdar 4200m 4½ hours walking**  
Today we walk further into the quiet distinct alpine areas through to Yak Kharka, which means Yak Pastures, and true to its name there are many yaks to be seen in the area – be careful when photographing them; they can

be very temperamental. We arrive at Letdar for lunch, and camp for the night.

**Day 12 Letdar to Thorong Phedi 4450m  
3 hours walking**

As we steadily branch away from the Marsyandi Khola keep your eyes open for Thar and Bharal, "blue" sheep. Crossing the Jarsang Khola we climb to a small grassy valley and camp. We have reached a point where altitude sickness may "kick in" – if you are feeling unwell please tell you're Sirdar and if necessary move back down to Letdar.

**Day 13 Trek to Muktinath 3800m via the Thorung La 5416m  
7 hours walking**

Though the crossing of the pass is not technically difficult, we take it slowly to avoid the complications of altitude and to cope with possible snow conditions. After approximately 4 hours we reach the top of Thorung La, one of the world's highest passes, catching our breath and enjoying some absolutely stunning high Himalaya scenery: the entire Annapurna ranges in the south; the Mukut and Mustang Himal to the west and the incredibly deep Kali Gandaki Valley; and the peaks of Thorungste 6482m and Chulu to the north. During our steep descent to Muktinath we can enjoy the excellent views of Dhaulagiri – the world's 7th highest peak 8167m.

**Day 14 Muktinath - Rest day and exploration**

A day to relax or explore the area. The walled temple complex Muktinath has for centuries been an important place of pilgrimage for both Hindus and Buddhists, with a Buddhist gumpa and a pagoda style temple dedicated to Vishnu. There is a thin blue flame of burning natural gas that can be seen beneath the altar in Jwala Mai Temple. Within the courtyard of the Vishnu Temple are 108 brass water spouts. Remember when visiting temples to be appropriately dressed; take off your shoes before entering and please do leave a small donation.

**Day 15 Muktinath to Jomsom 27100m  
6 hours walking**

The trail descends very quickly to the valley floor below, through a dramatic arid landscape, and continues to Jomsom. We continue walking to Marpha, which must be the cleanest village in the country. The long main street is paved with spotless flagstones winding past pristine white houses, each with piles of firewood neatly stacked to the roof. There are numerous well-kept lodges and Tibetan Craft shops. These two villages are the major villages on the Kali Gandaki trading route. We can enjoy the views of Tilicho Peak and Dhaulagiri.

**Day 16 Jomsom to Ghasa 2010m  
6/7 hours walking**

The Thakalis are dominant in this valley, interestingly related to the Gurung and Magars of the southern slopes. We pass through Tukuche from where we get an impressive

view of the mighty icefall tumbling down from the east face of the mountain. Keeping Dhaulagiri to our right we continue down the Kali Gandaki valley to Ghasa Village.

**Day 17 Ghasa to Tatopani 1190m  
6/7 hours walking**

As we descend we may encounter caravans of mules carrying loads of food grains from Pokhara or Beni to supply Mustang and Jomsom. We pass through a few villages and agricultural fields finally arriving at Tatopani (hot water) where you will have the opportunity to soak yourself in the hot spring to relax aching muscles and sore feet. Tatopani has been attracting trekkers since the 60's and whilst quite touristy these days, it is still quite laid back and mellow.

**Day 18 Tatopani to Ghorepani 2750m  
7/8 hours walking**

Crossing the Kali Gandaki river we slowly climb steeply up the village of Sikha, which is inhabited by Magars. We stop for lunch before climbing high and steadily for the rest of the day leaving behind the terraced fields and entering thick rhododendron forest and the village of Ghorepani. Poon Hill 3193m, is one of the most famous places to watch the sunrise across the magnificent Himalaya including Dhaulagiri to Manaslu in the east and the Annapurna range

**Day 19 Ghorepani to Ghandrung 1939m  
7 hours walking**

We start the morning with a steep and exciting climb to Deorali pass 2990m and the views on each side are among the best throughout Nepal. To the west we see Dhaulagiri and Gurja Himal, to the east Annapurna II, Manaslu 8163m and Himalchuli 7893m and above us towers the pyramid peak of Annapurna South. Below is the deepest river gorge in the world – the Kali Gandaki which is over 3 miles deep in places. From the pass we descend to Birethanti village which has a few teahouses and shops before continuing our trek to Ghandrung, the Gurung Village which is beautifully set against the peaks of the Annapurna South 7219m and Hiunchuli 6441m.

**Day 20 Ghandrung to Naya Pul, drive to Pokhara  
4 hours walking, 3 hours drive**

We descend rapidly to Syauli Bazaar, a village with few houses and shops and follow the Modi Khola down stream and reach Birethanti. We cross the Modi Khola and trek further down to Naya Pul. Meeting up with our porters, we collect our gear and depart by car/bus for the drive to Pokhara, (approximately 3 hours) where we can enjoy the luxury of a comfortable hotel after almost 3 weeks of trekking and camping.

**Day 21 Free day in Pokhara**

Time to explore the tourist resort of Pokhara at leisure, hire a boat on the lake, or merely sit in one of the lakeside cafes and enjoy a good pot of tea and some lovely home made cake (or

even egg and chips!) and reflect on your achievement over the last 3 weeks.

**Day 23 Depart Nepal**

Transfer to Kathmandu airport for international flights.

**Day 22 Early morning flight to Kathmandu**

Rest of the day free for packing, last minute shopping or relaxation in the hotel pool.

**Important Note: Whilst we expect that the trek will run as per the itinerary, participants should accept that there is a possibility of changes being necessary subject to local conditions.**

**The Price Includes:**

- Journeys (by air and road) between Kathmandu and Pokhara, including departure taxes for internal flights where applicable.
- Transfers between Kathmandu airport and hotel accommodation
- Accommodation for 3 nights in Kathmandu and 1 night in Pokhara in rooms with shower and wc and inclusive of breakfast
- Participation in the trek as per itinerary inclusive of full board, camping equipment (not sleeping bags), services of porters (15 kg load per participant); Sirdar (head guide) and kitchen staff; trekking permit

**Not Included:**

- International flights
- Nepalese visa - (please refer to our document "Preparing for your trek: Nepal" for latest prices)
- Meals other than breakfast in Kathmandu and Pokhara
- Travel insurance
- Tips
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, telephone calls and souvenirs (allow approximately £250 spending money)

**Options:**

Extra nights are available in Kathmandu in our group hotel, and in Pokhara in our choice of accommodation.

Extension packages can also be organized in Nepal, Tibet or Bhutan. Please refer to our Himalayan extensions dossier for more details. Extensions should be arranged to booking international flights.