

Old Nepal Treks

luxury trekking

with

BASANTA ADVENTURE
TREKS & EXPEDITIONS



Our Old Nepal itineraries capture the unique feeling of trekking in Nepal in the early days. Staying at our truly comfortable 'hidden gem' locations we access the 'real Nepal' that the tourist trails miss: unspoilt villages, traditional foothill farmland, stunning forests and panoramic views of the whole Himalaya. Be in no doubt - this is the greatest mountain landscape on the planet, and you really don't have to stick to the tourist trails to see the very best of it. Our secret Nepal is as gorgeous as ever. Walking days are designed to be easy enough for all casual walkers, linking our wonderful night stops through beautiful countryside and stunning views. Every detail of these itineraries is carefully crafted to give the richest experience of the gorgeous foothills and culture that only Nepal has to offer. Being here... in these incredible inspiring landscapes... staying in such fabulous locations - surely the most rewarding holiday available on earth. This is our beloved Old Nepal.

Secret Old Nepal in the valley

*himalayan panoramas,
evocative durbars &
traditional landscapes*

Some of the best Old Nepal hidden gems are right here in the Kathmandu valley - immerse yourself in Nepal's rich cultural and scenic tapestry. This is the perfect combination of panoramic mountain view walks, rich culture and gorgeous countryside.

Patan is the best Durbar in the Kathmandu valley. We stay at the delightful Patan Inn, a fantastic converted Newari house, carved

with the artisan skills that this little town is world famous for - two nights here to fully enjoy. Then to the near hills for the incredible panorama of the Himalayan peaks, the whole range from Dhaulagiri in the west, to Everest and Kangchenjunga in the east - we are right in the middle. An ancient trail through fabulous forests full of wildlife is the very best for it's magical views, and it ends at the one wonderful hotel allowed to be up here to enjoy it.

Then, via Bhaktapur Durbar Square, enjoying it's unique World Heritage pagodas and temples, we head to the east foothills for 2 nights at the amazing Namu Buddha Resort, a hidden gem designed as an authentic Newari village, comfortable cottages in beautiful gardens, forest, mountain views and sensational home grown food. It's a short pine forest walk to the Namu Buddha stupa and its fascinating Buddhist monastery.

An easy morning walk brings us down to the ancient township of Panauti - marvellously preserved temples dating back to the 14th century. Then the serene Gokarna Forest Resort where, for all the enjoyment of it's fantastic facilities, the highlight is the forest itself, the former hunting reserve of Nepal's rulers. Two nights here gives us an easy day walk to nearby Changu Narayan, Kathmandu's oldest and best restored temple, and on through traditional farmland where local villagers hand work the rich soil of the valley and their terraced fields just as they always have done.

A dawn walk in the gorgeous forest, and we head to the nearby Buddhist enclave of Boudhanath. This is the largest stupa temple in Nepal and our lovely hotel on the quiet edge of this 'little Tibet' is perfectly placed to stroll to this holiest of Buddhist shrines, joining the devout pilgrims who perform their 'kora' circumnabulations of the thousand prayer-wheels that line the route.



9 nights

5 full board
4 b&b in town



Best season for this trek:

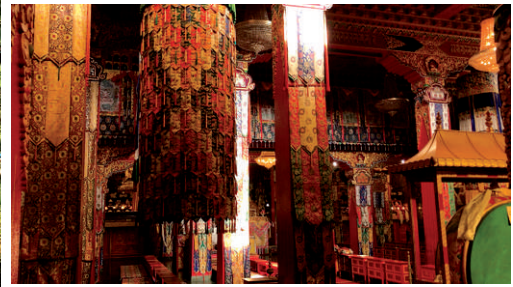
Mid-October to April - typically with clear views right through the cooler winter months; spring is best for forests in bloom



patan durbar



the patan inn



the naroo buddha resort



naroo buddha monastery



hattiban and the himalayas



day 1: arrive Kathmandu, transfer to Patan Inn (B&B)

Patan is the most rewarding of the old cities of Kathmandu with the best preserved Durbar Square, small streets rich in traditional architecture, a marvellous museum and the very best of the beautifully restored Newari inns for us to stay in. If your international flight is an afternoon arrival it is well worth adding an extra night at the wonderful Patan Inn to really make the most of it. This fabulous converted Newari town house has delightful rooms centred around a richly carved traditional courtyard with an excellent restaurant, one of many that are highly recommended in Patan.

day 2: Patan historical walk, Patan Inn (B&B)

There is so much to see, right here in Patan, exploring its marvellous little streets and hidden back squares. We start with an early visit to the famous Golden Temple, the Hiranya Varna Mahavihar, in fact a monastery with the unique Newari fusion of Buddhist and Hindu features. This is a very devout place and we do our best to be unobtrusive to the daily rituals that are the life blood of the temple. The intricacy of the copper gilt work introduces us to the incredible artisan skills that Patan is famous for. We go on to the Patan Durbar Square itself, densely packed with very diverse and beautifully crafted temples, now the best restored of any of the Kathmandu Durbars. There is so much here to see, but we will end at the award-winning Patan Museum which is full of fabulous treasures, intricately carved windows and historical narrative. For those interested, in the afternoon, we can also visit some artisan workshops - it is the centre for much of the best woodcarving and metalwork that Nepal is famous for.

day 3: drive to Champa Devi ridge, walk to Hattiban Resort

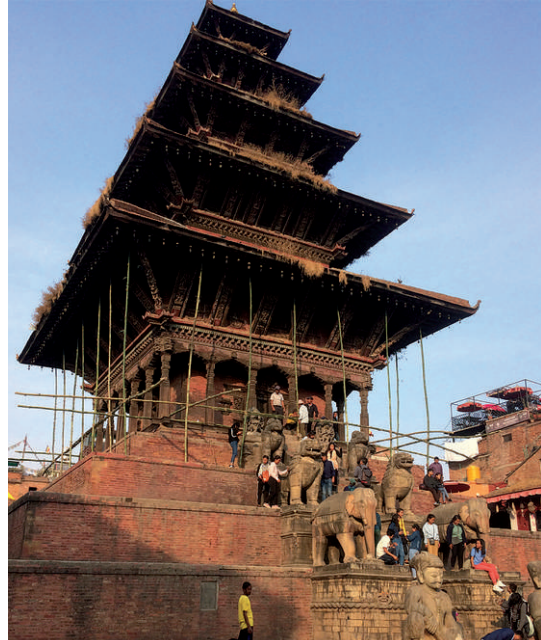
A short drive through town and up a winding jeep-trail brings us to the Champa Devi ridge which offers the very best walk on the Kathmandu rim. A fantastic ancient trail through the protected forests here gives simply the best views over the valley of the full panorama of the Himalayas, all the way from the Annapurnas to Everest itself. The ridge line trail winds through forest rich in wildlife, wild boar and musk-deer, to a short but steep-stepped ascent to its high point at 2500 metres. There is nothing difficult about this remarkably well-made trail as long as we take our time, both coming up and on the equally steep descent. We have all day to enjoy it. Just before arriving it levels out into the fabulous tall pine forests around our hotel. Hattiban enjoys a unique location here, a beautiful tranquil setting, its delightful gardens and comfortable rooms still with panoramic views as far as Everest.

day 4: visit Bhaktapur, afternoon drive to Namobuddha Resort

The Bhaktapur Durbar Square feels very different to Patan's, spread over a larger area with some truly unique buildings. The very ancient Palace of 55 Windows, the five storey Nyatapola pagoda, the tallest in Nepal, the beautifully proportioned Bhairava Nath temple, and the richly moulded Golden Gate, are some of the highlights. It takes less than an hour to drive here so we can spend plenty of time before lunch, but some groups may also want to visit nearby Thimi on the way with its backstreets of traditional pottery works - almost a working museum in its own right. After lunch we drive on for another hour to the unique and marvellous Namobuddha Resort right on the eastern edge of the Kathmandu valley. Purpose built cottages providing comfortable accommodation are carefully designed in the style of an authentic Newari village set in beautiful forest, gardens and organic home farming, with the backdrop of spectacular views of the mountains. With delicious food and a fantastic ambience, being here is one of our favourite Old Nepal experiences.

day 5: short walk to Namobuddha and Thrangu Tashi Yangtse Monastery, Namobuddha Resort

After a delicious breakfast on the terrace, it is a half hour walk through gorgeous pine forest to the famous Namobuddha stupa and its dedicated monastery. The legend is that the Buddha prince Mahasattva fed his own body piecemeal to a starving tigress so that her cubs could survive, and the stupa was built over his remains. The monastery is one of the largest in Nepal, home to 250 monks with a monastic college that combines Buddhist and modern scientific teaching. We return to our hotel for lunch and an afternoon relaxing in its wonderful village atmosphere.



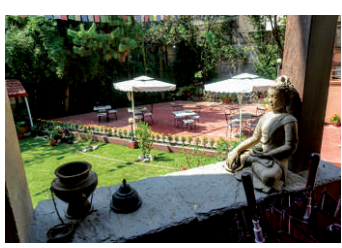
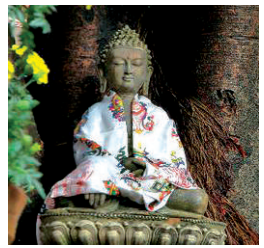
bhaktapur durbar
ह the craft village



gokarna forest



changu narayan
ह farmland walk



boudhanath



ह the Everest flight

day 6: walk down to Panauti, drive to Gokarna Forest Resort

Today we will walk down for a couple of easy hours, through forests and farmland, to the well preserved and ancient Newari township of Panauti. It's Indreshwar temple dedicated to Shiva is claimed to be the oldest in Kathmandu valley, dating back to about 1300. From here it is just an hours drive to the protected 470 acre Gokarna Forest, a haven of peace and beauty nestled in the Kathmandu valley. The hotel is comfortable and luxurious, with indoor pool, spas, golf course and fantastic restaurants, but the highlight will always be the forest itself. Huge mature fig trees dominate the site, and fallow deer and myriad other wildlife roam these former private hunting grounds of Nepal's rulers.

day 7: Changu Narayan temple and traditional farmland walk, Gokarna Forest Resort

A very short drive gets us to the start of today's fascinating short walk to the ancient temple of Changu Narayan, parts of which may even predate Indreshwar, now marvellously restored after some damage in the 2015 earthquake. The hilltop site includes the main pagoda dedicated to Vishnu and many other shrines all richly decorated and steeped in spiritual significance for the Hindus of Kathmandu. Heading on from here we descend into the best area of traditional farmland in the Kathmandu valley with beautiful terraced fields on the lower slopes descending to the monsoon flood-plain of the Manohara river. We might catch the rice harvest or, later on, potato cropping or land being tilled by traditional hand mattock. The intricate small fields are micro farming maintained meticulously, a fabulous maze of small paths and the drainage channels ingeniously worked to flood the rice paddies in the monsoon. More of a meander than a walk, with all the time in the world to chat with our guide to the colourful groups of village women working the land. Then we cross the river near a small forest and head back to the road for the very short drive back to Gokarna.

day 8: an early forest walk, then the famous Boudhanath stupa, Hotel Shambling (B&B)

The best way to end our delightful time at Gokarna is with a dawn, pre-breakfast, walk in the forest, the best time for wildlife. Then a very short drive brings us to the Buddhist quarter of Boudha. This is the small area around the biggest and most important Buddhist stupa in Nepal, Boudhanath. It feels like 'little Tibet' here with many red-robed monks and most of the devote visitors in Tibetan style dress. Our hotel is absolutely in keeping with this, designed in Tibetan style but with every comfort, and tucked into a quiet courtyard with a lovely garden decked in prayer flags. It is a short walk down little streets to visit the Boudhanath itself, quite the nicest way to quietly arrive here and join with the many devout pilgrims who come daily to perform their 'kora', the patient circumambulation of the great stupa, spinning the thousands of prayer wheels to the sound of a hundred mantras. We will spend the early evening here, when much of the local population gravitate to this evocative site. There are some excellent restaurants here, the best used mostly by locals, even devotees like to eat well in Buddhist culture.

day 9: morning Everest mountain flight, Hotel Shambling (B&B)

A benefit of our east Kathmandu location at Boudhanath is that it's just a 20 minute drive to the airport for the fantastic mountain flight. Nothing compares to this close encounter with Everest and the surrounding peaks, Lhotse, Makalu and Cho Oyu, the 8000 metre giants around the the most famous peak in the world. The afternoon of our last day is kept free to relax or to head into town if a little light shopping and evening life is your thing.

departure day:

The short drive back to the airport and depart Kathmandu



The **Centre for Environment Education Nepal (CEEN)** is a charitable organisation dedicated to improving environmental awareness in the beautiful country of Nepal. The challenge, as with many developing nations, is to redress behavioural norms to contemporary environmental issues, through education and motivation of Nepal's next generation. **Basanta Adventure**, as an ongoing contributor to CEEN, is particularly involved with it's Smart Eco Task Force students working on environmental clean-up projects. **We donate at least \$20 for every client on our Old Nepal treks.** When you join you are already contributing through us to the solution to Nepal's environmental issues, and we are always happy to give and receive any further interest or contributions, as many past clients have so generously pledged.

Some extension options for this trek to complete your perfect personal itinerary:

- **Dwarika's Resort** The most luxurious of all the retreats around the Kathmandu valley, a Mecca for all kinds of wellness.

See our Old Nepal Extensions sheet for many other ideas