

Annapurna Circuit Trek



The Annapurna Circuit Trek Nepal is the most iconic and diverse journeys in the Himalayas, offering an unmatched blend of culture, landscape, and adventure. Regarded as a classic route for trekking in the Annapurna region, this trek takes you through lush sub tropical forests, alpine meadows, high Himalayan passes, and arid Tibetan plateaus—all in a single circuit.

The Annapurna Circuit Trek from Kathmandu typically begins with a scenic drive to Besisahar or further to Chame, depending on road conditions. Many trekkers now prefer the drive to Chame for Annapurna Circuit to skip the lower road sections and dive straight into the heart of the trek. The Annapurna Circuit starting point varies based on itinerary preferences, but Chame and Dharapani are now common starting locations.

Where is Annapurna Circuit Trek?

The Annapurna Circuit Trek is located in the Annapurna region of central Nepal, within the Gandaki Province. It circles the Annapurna Massif, a section of the Himalayas that includes some of the world's highest peaks, such as Annapurna I (8,091m) and Dhaulagiri (8,167m). The trek typically begins with a drive from Kathmandu to Chame or Besisahar, passing through the Marsyangdi River Valley, and crosses the famous Thorong La Pass (5,416m). It descends through the Kali Gandaki Valley, ending in Jomsom with a flight back to Pokhara.

Trek Highlights:

- **Scenic Drive to Chame:** Begin your adventure with a scenic drive to Chame for Annapurna Circuit, cutting travel time and starting the trek closer to the high Himalayas.

- **Trekking in the Annapurna Region:** Explore one of Nepal’s most diverse and culturally rich regions, from lush forests to arid valleys influenced by Tibetan culture.
- **Thorong La Pass (5,416m):** Conquer one of the world’s highest trekking passes on the Thorong La Pass trek, offering stunning 360° Himalayan panoramas.
- **Cultural Encounters:** Visit Buddhist monasteries, Hindu temples, and traditional villages that reflect the rich heritage of the region.
- **Sacred Site of Muktinath:** Reach the spiritual hub of Muktinath, a pilgrimage site for both Hindus and Buddhists, believed to offer liberation (Moksha).
- **Annapurna Circuit Starting Point Flexibility:** Begin your journey from Besisahar, Dharapani, or Chame based on time and preferences.
- **Tea Houses on Annapurna Circuit:** Stay in cozy local tea houses along the trail, enjoying warm hospitality and local cuisine.
- **Annapurna Circuit with Tilicho Lake Option:** Add a detour to the mesmerizing Tilicho Lake, one of the highest alpine lakes in the world at 4,919m.
- **Scenic Flight from Jomsom to Pokhara:** End your trek with a stunning mountain flight over the Kali Gandaki Valley to the lakeside city of Pokhara.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu, Nepal

Upon your arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport, you’ll be greeted by our representative and transferred to your hotel.

Day 2: Drive from Kathmandu (1,350m) to Chamje (1,430m) - 8 to 9 hours

Start your journey with a scenic overland drive from Kathmandu toward the Annapurna region. The route winds through lush hillsides, picturesque river valleys, and traditional villages, offering your first glimpse of Nepal’s rural beauty. The road is a mix of paved highways and rugged off-road tracks, especially as you approach the mountain region. You’ll arrive at Chamje, a small village nestled beside the Marsyangdi River, in the late afternoon. Relax and get ready to begin trekking the next day.

Day 3: Trek from Chamje to Dharapani (1,860m) - Approx.5 hours

Begin your first day of trekking as you follow the trail alongside the Marsyangdi River, passing through dense forests, cascading waterfalls, and dramatic cliffs. You’ll cross several suspension bridges and reach Tal, a scenic village set on a wide river plateau with a waterfall backdrop. After a short break here, continue along the trail as it gradually ascends to Dharapani, a key checkpoint village with Tibetan-influenced architecture.

Day 4: Trek from Dharapani to Chame (2,670m) - Approx. 5 Hours

After breakfast, begin your steady ascent through serene pine and fir forests. The trail gradually climbs along the Marsyangdi River, passing through small settlements like Bagarchhap and Danaque, where Tibetan-influenced culture is prominent. As you gain elevation, enjoy panoramic views of Mt. Manaslu (8,163m) and other snow-capped peaks. You'll pass several waterfalls, cross suspension bridges, and enjoy scenic ridges before reaching Chame, the administrative center of the Manang District. Chame offers a blend of natural beauty and essential services, including teahouses, shops, electricity, and limited internet access.

Day 5: Trek from Chame to Pisang (3,200m) - Approx. 5-6 Hours

Today's journey takes you deeper into the heart of the Annapurna region. The trail follows the Marsyangdi River, winding through narrow gorges, dense pine forests, and rocky cliffs. You'll cross several suspension and wooden bridges, with striking views of the changing landscape and surrounding snow-capped peaks. As you ascend, the air gets cooler, and the vegetation begins to thin. Upon reaching Pisang, you'll notice a shift in architecture and culture, with traditional stone houses, Buddhist prayer flags, and mani walls lining the village.

Day 6: Trek from Nawal to Manang (3,540m) Approx. 4-5 Hours

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Day 7: Trek from Nawal to Manang (3,540m) - Approx. 4-5 Hours

Today's trek begins with a gentle descent through pine forests, passing by grazing yaks and open alpine meadows. As you continue, the trail rejoins the classic Annapurna Circuit route and passes through the picturesque village of Braga, home to one of the region's most ancient and iconic Buddhist monasteries. From Braga, it's a short and scenic walk to Manang, a bustling settlement with flat-roofed stone houses, bakeries, and teahouses nestled beneath the towering Annapurna peaks.

Day 8: Acclimatization Day in Manang (3,540m)

Today is a scheduled acclimatization day to help your body adjust to the increasing altitude and prepare for the higher elevations ahead. While it's a rest day, light activity is encouraged to promote adaptation. You can explore Manang village, interact with locals, or choose from several short hikes in the area. Popular options include: - A scenic hike to Gangapurna Lake and its viewpoint.

Day 9: Trek from Manang to Yak Kharka (4,050m / 4 hours)

Today's trek marks a significant ascent into the high alpine zone. The trail climbs gradually, allowing your body to continue acclimatizing. You'll pass through Tengi and Gunsang, small settlements with stunning views of Annapurna III, Tilicho Peak, and Gangapurna. As you leave the tree line behind, the landscape opens into windswept meadows and yak pastures, with occasional sightings of blue sheep and grazing animals. The crisp mountain air and expansive views make this one of the more serene days of the journey. Yak Kharka, meaning "Yak Pasture," is a peaceful stopover point with basic tea houses and dramatic views of the surrounding peaks and glacial valleys.

Day 10: Trek from Yak Kharka to Thorong Phedi (4,450m/3 hours)

Today's trek is relatively short but important as you gain more elevation on your approach to Thorong La Pass. The trail climbs gradually along rocky slopes, crossing a suspension bridge and a landslide-prone area before reaching Thorong Phedi, the last stop before the high pass. Thorong Phedi is a small settlement nestled at the foot of the Thorong La and serves as the base camp for the next day's crossing. Due to the high altitude, take it slow and steady. Once you arrive, focus on rest, hydration, and nutrition to prepare your body for the demanding pass ahead.

Day 11: Cross Thorong La Pass (5,416m) and Trek to Muktinath (3,760m/10-11 hours)

This is the most challenging and rewarding day of the Annapurna Circuit Trek. You'll start before dawn—around 4:00 AM to tackle the long, steady ascent to Thorong La Pass (5,416m), one of the highest trekking passes in the world. The climb is slow due to high altitude, but the effort is worth it. At the summit, you're rewarded with panoramic views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges, the Chulu Peaks, and the arid Mustang Valley stretching far below. After spending a few moments at the top for photos and celebration, begin a steep descent toward Muktinath, a sacred destination for both Hindus and Buddhists.

Day 12: Trek from Muktinath to Jomsom (2,670m/Approx. 6 hours)

After a peaceful morning visit to the sacred Muktinath Temple, begin your descent through the picturesque villages of Jharkot and Kagbeni. Along the way, admire the stark beauty of the Mustang region, where the lush greenery of the Himalayas gradually gives way to dry, windswept valleys and eroded cliffs. Enjoy views of Dhaulagiri (8,167m) and the Nilgiri peaks as you follow the ancient trade route along the Kali Gandaki River famous for its deep gorge and black fossil stones known as Shaligrams. By afternoon, you'll arrive in Jomsom (2,670m), the district headquarters of Mustang.

Day 13: Fly from Jomsom to Pokhara (Approx. 25 minute)

Today, you'll take a short yet breathtaking flight from Jomsom to Pokhara, soaring between the towering peaks of the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna mountain ranges. This scenic aerial journey offers spectacular views of deep river valleys, rugged cliffs, and snow-capped summits—one of the most picturesque flights in Nepal.

Day 14: Drive from Pokhara to Kathmandu (6-7 hours)

After enjoying the serene beauty of Pokhara, it's time to leave the mountains behind and drive back to Kathmandu. The scenic journey takes approximately 6 to 7 hours, winding through picturesque hills, terraced fields, and traditional villages, offering a last chance to soak in Nepal's stunning landscapes.

Inclusions:

- Transportation: Local bus from Kathmandu to Chamje and comfortable tourist bus from Pokhara to Kathmandu.
- Accommodation During Trek: Basic tea house/Hotel stays in twin-sharing rooms
- Guide Services: Professional, licensed, and English-speaking trekking guide
- Porter Service: 1 porter for every 2 trekkers (carrying up to 15–20 kg combined)
- Permits: All necessary trekking permits and local entry fees
- First Aid Kit: Basic first aid supplies carried by the guide
- Drinking Water: Safe drinking water (filtered/boiled) during the trek
- Support Staff Costs: Guide and porter wages, food, accommodation, and insurance
- Government Taxes: All applicable government and local taxes

Exclusions:

- Nepal Visa Fees (obtainable upon arrival at Kathmandu airport)
- International Flights to and from Nepal
- Meals on Trek: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner with tea/coffee during trekking days
- Accommodation in Kathmandu before and after the trek (unless stated in package)
- Meals in Kathmandu: Lunch and dinner in the city
- Personal Expenses: Snacks, beverages, extra drinks, hot showers, battery charging, Wi-Fi, and laundry
- Travel Insurance: Must include emergency medical evacuation coverage
- Trekking Gear: Sleeping bag, trekking poles, and personal equipment (available for rent)
- Tips for Guide and Porter (customary but not mandatory)



Best time for the Annapurna Circuit Trek

The best time for Annapurna Circuit Trekking is during the spring (March to May) and autumn (September to November) seasons.

Spring Season (March to May): Spring brings mild temperatures and longer daylight hours, perfect for trekking. During this time, the rhododendron forests burst into vibrant bloom, painting the landscape with rich colors. The skies are generally clear, providing spectacular views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri mountain ranges. Spring is ideal for nature lovers and photographers wanting to capture the Himalayas at their best.

Autumn Season (September to November): Autumn is considered the peak trekking season in Nepal. After the monsoon rains, the air is fresh and clean, with crisp blue skies and excellent visibility. Temperatures are moderate—cool in the mornings and evenings but warm during the day. Trails are dry and safe, making it a favorite time for trekkers. The festive season in Nepal also adds a cultural charm to the trekking experience.



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