

The Road to Kathmandu

Visiting: India, Nepal
Code: GIRK

Tour price from **GBP 745.00** for **13 days** - Land Only

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The Road to Kathmandu Trip Notes

At Imaginative Traveller we always aim to provide accurate information for our travellers.

Unfortunately information such as the price of optional activities is occasionally subject to change, and this means that we are constantly revising our trip notes. In order to ensure that you have the most up to date information for your trip we suggest that you check the trip notes for your tour around one month before departure.

Trip code: GIRK

Trip valid from: 01/09/2010

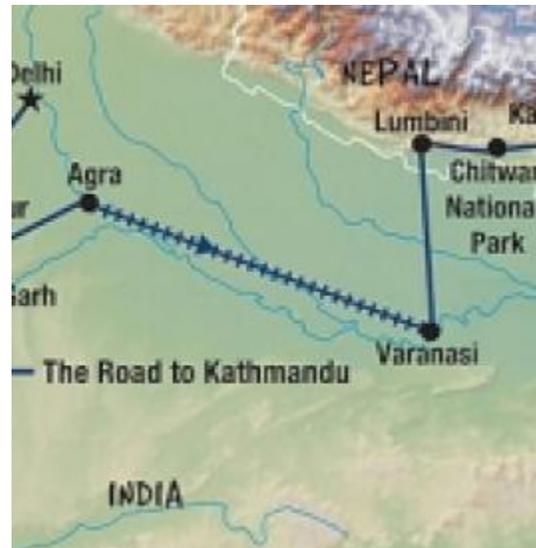
Trip valid until: 30/06/2012

Trip length: 13 days

Trip starts in: Delhi

Trip ends in: Kathmandu

Maximum group size: 16



Highlights

Bodhnath Stupa

Canoe At Chitwan National Park
Elephant Safari At Chitwan National Park
Explore Kathmandu's Hidden Old Town
Pokhara
Ride A Rickshaw, Kathmandu
Sunset In Annapurna
Visit The Birthplace Of Buddhism, Lumbini
Discover Delhi
Morning At The Taj Mahal
Travel By Train
Visit Jaipur's Amber Fort

This is one of the great overland journeys. From Delhi, we head to Jaipur, the lively capital of Rajasthan, before shifting gear to explore a charming rural village, staying in a centuries-old palace. We marvel at the world's most famous Mughal icon, the Taj Mahal, then head to the holy city of Varanasi, where pilgrims bathe in the holy water of the Ganges. Over the border in Nepal, we search for exotic wildlife on elephant-back, before reaching the famed Himalayan city of Kathmandu.

Itinerary

Day 1 Delhi

Today is an arrival day and no activities are planned, so you may arrive at any time. If you are arriving early, please check the noticeboard in the foyer of the hotel for suggestions of things to see and do in Delhi. A pre-departure meeting takes place this evening at the hotel. Please also check the noticeboard for details of this meeting and for any other messages from your tour leader. Please also bring your passport and travel insurance documents to the meeting. Afterwards we have the opportunity to go out for an optional group dinner.

Day 2-3 Jaipur

This morning we travel to Jaipur - the vibrant and colourful capital of Rajasthan. Here, traditionally dressed Rajput men wearing colourful turbans and sporting magnificent moustaches make their way through crowded streets packed with cars, camel carts, rickshaws, trucks and bicycles. On our second day in Jaipur we travel 11 kilometres out to the stunning medieval Amber Fort. This fort was built in 1592 by Maharaja Man Singh and is a superb example of Rajput architecture. Several hours are needed to explore this huge

fortification and we include the services of a local guide for our tour. Our tour leader also takes us to an area known as the Old Bazaar where the Hawa Mahal, better known as The Palace of the Winds, is situated. This five-storey façade with its pink, honeycombed sandstone windows is one of Jaipur's best-known landmarks. We also have ample free time in Jaipur and there are many interesting things to see and do; our tour leader will be happy to assist us with getting to some of these places.

Day 4 Tordi Garh

One of the features of a Imaginative Traveller's trip through Rajasthan is visits to small, out of the way villages. Tordi Garh is a small town that we have identified is a true 'off the beaten track' experience. We travel by jeeps through beautiful countryside en route to Tordi. Very few travellers have even heard of Tordi and even fewer visit it, because it's hard to get to on your own. We explore the village, meeting potters, visiting an old village temple, walking through markets and meeting families on the way. Ruined temples and a fortress lie further afield and we enjoy a visit to these sites. Our host is the owner of the palace at Tordi. He is a direct descendant of the feudal lord who built the palace in the 16th century. The accommodation has unforgettable ambience and charm and really makes the visit to Tordi a special highlight.

Day 5-6 Agra - overnight train

We leave Tordi by jeep and then transfer on to a bus for the four-hour drive to Agra, home to India's most famous site - the majestic Taj Mahal. After settling in we visit this amazing 17th century marble mausoleum, built by Emperor Shah Jahan as a tomb for his second wife who died giving birth. Started in 1631 the project was completed in 1648 and employed a workforce of over 20,000 people. Construction materials were brought from all over India with the marble from Rajasthan transported by over 1000 elephants. Our tour leader can also help us arrange an optional visit to Agra Fort. After our time in Agra we board our overnight sleeper train and head eastward to Varanasi.

Day 7-8 Varanasi

Regarded as the spiritual heart of India, Varanasi is the city of Shiva built on the banks of the sacred Ganges River. Thousands of pilgrims flock to the great ghats to bathe in the holy waters - a ritual that is believed to wash away all sins. The city claims to be one of the oldest in the world and it's a magical place where we are able to witness the rituals of life and death on the ghats, on an early morning boat ride. Our tour leader also takes us for a walk through the back lanes and crowded alleyways of this timeless city.

Day 9 Lumbini

We continue our journey to the Nepalese border. It's a long day of travelling (approximately 8 hours), but done in the relative comfort of our own vehicles with several rest stops. In the morning we cross into Nepal. After customs and immigration formalities are completed, our Indian tour leader will bid us farewell and hand us over to his Nepalese Indian counterpart. Our night stop, Lumbini, is the birthplace of Prince

Siddharta Gautama - founder of the Buddhist religion. We visit the various temple complexes that have been constructed by Buddhists from Japan, China and Myanmar, as well as the ancient Ashoka Pillar and Maya Devi Temple. We spend the night in a lovely jungle camp - a great base for a walk or bike ride.

Day 10-11 Chitwan National Park

In the early morning we leave Lumbini by private vehicle and travel across the plains to Chitwan National Park. We then descend to the village of Sauhara in the Terai, on the edge of the flat Chitwan jungle region at the base of the mighty Himalayan range. During our lodge stay we ride elephants into the jungle and, accompanied by a wildlife guide, go in search of Indian rhinoceros, sloth bear, deer and a multitude of different birds. Tiger sightings are very rare these days; however, luck may be on our side! We also have time at for some optional activities such as jeep and canoe safaris.

Day 12 Kathmandu

We catch a morning bus that joins the Rajpath (Prithvi Highway) and takes us to the rim of the Kathmandu Valley before descending on our entry to Nepal's capital. In the final evening we have the opportunity to head out for a final group dinner (optional) before saying our goodbyes.

Day 13 Kathmandu

Our trip ends today around breakfast time. If you wish to stay on in Kathmandu, please pre-book your post-tour accommodation before you commence your travels.

Itinerary Variation

While the information presented here details our planned itinerary, including routes taken, activities included, accommodation and meeting times, please accept that unforeseen changes may occur. We are constantly on the lookout to improve our program and further enhance your experience. Naturally, we will keep you up to date with any last minute amendments to your tour.

About The Imaginative Traveller

Our aim has always been to provide exceptional travel experiences. We believe that adventure travel should be stimulating, and that it should give you an authentic experience of a place. We want our travellers to relish the amazing diversity of countries and cultures the world has to offer. Our focus is on innovation, not imitation.

Obsessed with quality

One of our strengths has been our obsession with quality. We've always believed that our commitment to you doesn't end as soon as you've paid for your holiday. On the contrary, it is just beginning. Whilst most operators simply get a local company to handle the day to day operation of their tours, we do it all ourselves. We have managers for each of our **key destinations** around the world and all our small groups are escorted by our own leaders. Our local teams include guides, drivers, administration staff and contacts in the local community who help us ensure that our adventures are active and involving.

For comparability, all prices in this dossier are quoted in one currency. We use the US Dollar since that is familiar to most. However, once on tour you will need to pay for all goods and services in the local currency. See your Country Dossier for details of exchange rates.

Trip Grade

Culture

Wildlife

Fitness

Any able-bodied person can do this trip.

Included

All tours are led by experienced regional tour leaders in Nepal and India. All transportation and accommodation as indicated in detailed Trip Notes. The following sightseeing trips are included: Royal Chitwan National Park - park entrance fees and one elephant ride; Agra - one visit to the Taj Mahal including transport, entrance and local guide fees; Tordi Garh - village walk and jeep safari; Jaipur - one visit to Amber Fort including transport, entrance and local guide fees; Delhi - an orientation walk around Chandi Chowk and Janpath including transport.

Not included

International flights, arrival and departure transfers, airport/departure taxes, visas, pre or post tour accommodation, meals, optional tours sightseeing or activities during free time, transfers outside of the tour program, travel insurance, tips and items of a personal nature, laundry and flights unless specified. Some places that we visit charge additional fees if you are entering with a camera or camcorder - your city guide will advise on these and they can be paid for locally.

Accommodation

7 nights Hotels/guesthouses,3 nights Jungle lodge,1 night Historic hotel,1 night Overnight train

Single room supplement

Most of our travellers like the thought of travelling with a few like-minded souls. There are NO compulsory single supplements on most tours as we simply arrange twin shared accommodation for you and another tour member of the same sex. But don't worry if that doesn't appeal. We do understand there are times when you just want a bit of privacy and 'me' time so we are more than happy to arrange a private room upon request when you book.

Transport

Bicycle rickshaw,Boat,Bus,Elephant,Local bus,On foot,Sleeper train,Taxi

The local payment is the final part of your overall tour cost. It MUST be paid in cash, in the currency indicated, to your tour leader at the start of your trip.

Having a local payment helps us to pass cost savings on to you. Please note that the Local Payment is non-refundable

Optional excursions

*prices below are guide only

Agra - Agra Fort entrance

- US\$8

Chitwan - Canoe Trip

- US\$11 (per person)

Chitwan - Jeep Safari

- US\$18 (per person)

Chitwan - Park Entrance Fee

- US\$9

Delhi - Full day tour of the Taj Mahal and Agra Fort (from Delhi)

- US\$170/entrance fees US\$18 & US\$8

Delhi - Half-day sightseeing tour of New Delhi including India Gate, Raj Ghat, President's Palace, Humayun's Tomb & Qutab Minar

- US\$50 per car / US\$20 entrance fee

Delhi - Sound and Light Show

- US\$40 per car/entrance US\$5

Jaipur - Half-day sightseeing tour of city palace, Jantar Mantar, Albert Hall, gardens & temple

- US\$50 per car/entrances US\$15.

Jaipur - Tour of Nahargarh Fort

- US\$40 per car/entrance US\$3.

Kathmandu - Bhaktapur entrance

- US\$15

Kathmandu - Half Day tour to Bhaktapur & Patan

- US\$30 approx

Kathmandu - Mt Everest scenic flight - including transfers

- approx US\$185

Kathmandu - Patan entrance

- US\$4

Kathmandu - Taxi to Bodnath Stupa

-

Kathmandu - Taxi to Pashupatinath

-

Tordi Ghar - Half day tour of village and surrounding countryside

- US\$10-15 depending on number of participants

Varanasi - Half-day city tour of Varanasi

- US\$40 per car

Varanasi - Half-day tour of Sarnath

- US\$40 per car/entrance US\$4

The itinerary and supplementary information has been compiled with care and provided in good faith. However it may be subject to change, and does not form part of a contract between the client and The Imaginative Traveller.

Responsible Travel - Travellers' Guidelines

At Imaginative Traveller we love helping our clients experience the beauty and cultures of the destinations we visit. However, hand in hand with this we have always been aware that we have a responsibility to minimise any negative impacts that tourism can bring.

Responsible Travel is twofold. It's about taking people to the places they want to go in a safe and responsible manner but also about respecting and maintaining the natural and often delicate balance of the destination. Economic gain from tourism is often fundamental to a country, but should never be at the expense of its culture or the environment.

Our Aims

It is our aim to provide journeys that have minimal negative and maximum positive impact on the places we visit.

We do not believe that, as visitors, we should impose our own cultures on others; rather that we should experience foreign cultures and appreciate them for what they are.

Whilst it is our aim to show destinations and cultures in a positive light, we do not believe in papering over the cracks or shielding visitors from the realities of life. This does not mean, however, that we condone or endorse certain situations or regimes that may be in place.

Our guidelines are meant not as rigid instructions but rather as suggestions to make our holidays more enjoyable – for everybody. As cultural and environmental sensitivities vary from country to country more specific guidelines can be found in our individual country and trip dossiers.

Travellers' Guidelines

✓ Before you depart try to spend some time familiarising yourself with the destination you will be travelling to – their culture and customs. The country dossiers on our website offer detailed information about all the regions we visit. They also include some useful phrases in the local language for you to use on your trip! A few words of the local language can open up many more opportunities for you to interact with the people you will meet.

✓ Although it is tempting to give out pens, sweets and money to people begging, and particularly tempting to give to children, we feel that this encourages a begging mentality and has a long-term negative impact on communities. If someone begging earns more than someone in the same community

who works this can discourage local employment. If children regularly bring home money it may discourage their parents from sending them to school. It is of course your own personal choice but you could consider giving to registered charities or contributing to our Responsible Travel fund instead. Money donated through our fund to our worldwide projects is matched pound for pound by Imaginative Traveller and used to help local grassroots projects.

- ✓ Always ask permission to photograph local people and respect their decision if they would prefer not to have their picture taken.
- ✓ Respect local dress codes, especially at religious sites. Our tour leaders are always on hand to give you advice about this.
- ✓ In many of the countries we visit you might see examples of animal cruelty (for example dancing bears, performing monkeys and snake charmers). Please do not take photographs of this or offer money as it encourages the activity.
- ✓ Respect the environment you are in. It sounds obvious but do not throw litter, take it with you or use rubbish bins! You may see locals throwing rubbish on the street but do not follow their example!
- ✓ When shopping in countries where haggling is the norm – enjoy it and only pay what you feel is a fair price for the goods you are purchasing. However, remember that the shopkeeper does have to make a living so do stop once you have reached a price you are happy with. Bargaining should be fun but always remember that a small amount can mean much more to the vendor than to you.
- ✓ Endeavor to take home souvenirs made locally; the money you spend can be very important to the local communities. However, do use your common sense and don't buy anything that you think might be made out of endangered animals or plants.
- ✓ To help keep as much money as possible in the host country - try to eat in locally owned restaurants and order local drinks and produce rather than international brands.
- ✓ In hotels do be conscious of how much water you are using. Many of the areas we visit regularly have shortages; try not to have hour long showers! Don't leave lights, air conditioners or fans on when you leave the room – you wouldn't at home!
- ✓ Respect the environment you are in, especially when in national parks or reserves. Pay attention to rules about keeping on paths, keeping a distance from animals and not removing any of the natural habitat.
- ✓ Relax and immerse yourself in the differences of the culture you are in – you'll be back home in the familiar soon enough (and wishing you were still on holiday!). These cultural differences are part of what makes your experience special.

If you would like to offset the carbon dioxide that will be produced on your flights you can do this on our website ([on our Responsible travel page](#)). We work with climatecare, who will reduce the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide that you produce in another part of the World through their emission reduction projects. These projects are low carbon efficient technologies in developing countries and not only serve to reduce emissions but also help to spread the adoption of low carbon technologies and improve the quality of life for local communities. Details of climatecare's projects can be [found on their website](#).



If you would like to contribute to our Worldwide projects, helping communities all over the World, you can also do this on our website or with a sales consultant. Please refer to our [responsible travel page](#) on the website for details of our current projects. Any donation you make will be matched £ for £ by Imaginative Traveller (up to a maximum of £1000).

Have a great trip!

Please do let us know if you have any comments about responsible travel at rto@intrav.net

The Imaginative Traveller & Gecko's Adventures This trip is operated by our partner company, Gecko's Adventures. Gecko's is an Australia based company with more than 30 years experience in adventure travel and they share our ethos for offering unique holiday adventures. As this is a codeshared departure you can expect there to be both Imaginative Traveller and Gecko's travellers on your trip.

Last updated: 27/01/2011

Questions?

If you have any questions please [click here](#) to view our Q & A page where you can view questions other travellers have asked and submit your own.