DAY BY DAY ITINERARY
This itinerary will always need to remain flexible, and may change due to weather conditions, the pace of the group or other unforeseen circumstances. Times and distances are approximate. (B,L,D) refers to meals included in the trip cost: breakfast, lunch, dinner.

This trip is 14 days ex KATHMANDU. The first and last days refer to the days of arrival in and departure from KATHMANDU, and may not be the days you leave or return home.

DAY 1
Arrive Kathmandu. Hotel.

DAY 2
In Kathmandu; visit Boudhanath and Pashupatinath.
We have a half day tour visiting two of the most important temples in the Kathmandu Valley. Boudhanath is one of the largest Buddhist stupas in the world and is surrounded by several Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. Pashupatinath is the most important Hindu temple in the valley and all Hindus should visit it once in their lifetime. Set on the banks of the Bagmati the funeral pyres burn every day. Brightly coloured Sadhus, or holy men, wander round the temples all day. Hotel (B)
DAY 3  **Fly to Pokhara, drive to Khare, start trek**
The excitement begins with a 45 minute flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara with good views of the Himalayan range on a clear day. As we approach Pokhara the skyline is dominated by Manaslu and the Annapurnas. After a short transfer to Khare, we meet the porters, have lunch, then it’s time to set off. The trail leads through terraced fields to the village of Deurali where we spend the night in our first lodge. 3-4 hours walking. (B)

DAY 4  **Trek to Ghandruk**
Today starts with an easy walk to Landrung from where we descend to the river. The trail then climbs steeply on a well built stone staircase passing neatly terraced hillsides to Ghandruk (1,951m). Ghandruk is a large, prosperous Gurung village and we have time to explore the maze of narrow alleyways separating neat slate-roofed houses and watch the ever-changing sunlight on Annapurna South and Machhapuchhare (B)

DAY 5  **Trek to Tadapani**
From Ghandruk our trail enters the forest and we climb up through the forest to Tadapani, a small clearing with excellent views of Machhapuchare and Annapurna South. There is time in the afternoon for those interested in birds to explore the surrounding forest. (B)

DAY 6  **Trek to Ghorepani**
From Tadapani we continue climbing through forest. Past Banthanthi the trail reaches a small col from where we descend to Ghorepani. Meaning ‘horse water’ Ghorepani was the stopping place for the huge trains of horses carrying goods into the Kali Gandaki Valley. (B)

DAY 7  **Poon Hill sunrise walk, trek to Hille**
We walk early in the morning for sunrise to Poon Hill. At just over 3,000m it is the high point of our trek and what a view. As the sun raise the whole of the Annapurna range comes into view. We can also see Dhaulagiri and Machhapuchhare, the holy Fishtail Mountain. Reckoned to be one of the best viewpoints in the Himalaya we have plenty of time to take in the scenery before descending to our lodge in Ghorepani for a well earned breakfast. We then descend all back into the forest down to Banthanthi.
Descending further we emerge from the forest at Ulleri from where 3,600 stone steps bring us to Tirkhedunga. From here it’s a short walk to our lodge at Hille. (B)

**DAY 8**

**Trek to Birethanthi and drive to Pokhara**
A short easy walk takes us by the river to the end of our trek at Birethanthi. We meet our transport at Naya Pul and have a short drive to Pokhara. We stay in a small guest house close to the lakeside. Guest House (B)

**DAY 9**

**Pokhara**
A free day to explore this pleasant lakeside area. You can hire a bike and explore the lakeside or take a walk to the Japanese Peace Pagoda set on a hill opposite the lake. Or you may like to hire a rowing boat for a couple of hours on the lake. There are plenty of shops and lakeside restaurants to sit and enjoy the views. Guest House. (B)

**DAY 10**

**Chitwan National Park**
Drive to Chitwan we leave Pokhara this morning for the drive to Chitwan. The road heads east towards Kathmandu for a few hours and then turns south and follows the Trisuli River to Chitwan. We should arrive at our lodge by lunchtime and in the afternoon we will have the first of our jungle safaris. Lodge. (B,L,D)

**DAY 11**

**Chitwan National Park**
We spend the day in Chitwan exploring the area on foot, on elephant back and in dugout canoes. Accompanied by a naturalist we hope to spot deer, one horned rhinos, plenty of birds and maybe even a tiger. Lodge (B,L,D)

**DAY 12**

**Drive to Kathmandu**
After a short early morning safari and breakfast we return to Kathmandu arriving usually mid afternoon. Hotel (B)

**DAY 13**

**Kathmandu**
Visit Bhaktapur, optional Everest flight
This morning there is the option to take the scenic flight to see Everest (weather permitting). This can be booked and paid for locally. Late morning we will drive 17km to Bhaktapur, one of the other medieval cities in the Kathmandu Valley. Bhaktapur
has a timeless feeling and has an interesting Durbar Squares filled with temples.
Hotel. (B)

DAY 14  Depart Kathmandu. (B)

Nepal
Nepal is a small country, wedged between India and Tibet and dominated by the Eastern Himalayas. Many of today’s trekking routes are ancient trade routes between India and Tibet. These and the porter skills of the mountain people are the main factors in allowing westerners access to the highest regions. Nepal’s diverse geography has shaped an equally diverse kaleidoscope of cultures. The spiritual heritage influenced by Tibetan Buddhism in the higher regions and Hinduism elsewhere gives substance to peoples’ lives throughout Nepal, making them reverent, kind, hospitable and hard-working people.

Trip Summary
This trip is an ideal introduction to the delights of Nepal. There is plenty of time to explore the temples and bazaars in and around the Kathmandu Valley and tours are included to Bhaktapur, Boudhanath and Pashupatinath. We have a short trek to Poon Hill for one of the most spectacular sunrise views in the Himalaya. We also have time to explore the lakeside resort of Pokhara and include a visit to Chitwan for jungle safaris and the chance of spotting a tiger. There is even the chance to take an optional scenic flight to see Everest.

Fitness
On some days the walking is strenuous, due both to the altitude and to the terrain, but there is plenty of time to acclimatise, and the trip is suitable for anyone who is reasonably fit. Previous walking experience is an advantage, but is not necessary. Just as important are adaptability and an open mind.

Lodge treks
In the popular areas where there are many lodges to choose from, we like to support the local people by sleeping in lodges rather than carrying an independent camp. You will have more encounters with locals on a lodge trek, and will often be accommodated within the family home. Solar showers are available at some lodges for approx NRS300 and charging facilities with the cost ranging from NRS250-350 per hrs.

The trip is on bed and breakfast basis, Lunch and dinner on this trek are not included. Breakfast is a fixed set breakfast consisting of porridge or muesli, toast and egg. Please allow £25 - £30 per day for other meals and drinks on trek. You can choose food from the menus which serves traditional Nepalese Rice and Lentils to continental foods. Vegetarians will have a good choice (it is normally best to avoid meat on the trail unless you are sure it has been freshly killed).
We try to discourage buying mineral water bottles on trek. We advise you to have boiled water or treat the tap water. Some places in the Annapurna region have safe drinking water stations.

Trekking life
A trekking day usually starts early, around 7-7:30 am. After breakfast we set off. Lunch will break the pace, for about an hour. Most days we will reach our destination by early afternoon, leaving time to wash/relax before dinner at around 7pm. Bedtime beckons early and by about 8-9pm you will be ready to fall into your sleeping bag.

Kathmandu
In Kathmandu, we stay in a centrally located hotel (B&B) which gives you the chance to choose between the wide range of restaurants. You can buy a meal in Kathmandu for around £10-15, excluding alcohol.

Language
The national language is Nepali, which has similarities to Hindi. Some locals will speak enough English for simple conversations, but many will not. A few words of Nepali will help to increase mutual understanding.

Transport
Flights between Kathmandu and Lukla take approx 30 mins. Bad weather can sometimes cause delays.

Luggage
Your luggage will be carried by porters. All you have to carry is what you need for the day: waterproofs, fleece, hat, camera, water bottle etc. A trek bag is ideal for your main luggage, plus a small lockable bag for leaving travel clothes etc in Kathmandu.

Climate
Post monsoon weather in October/November/December is typically stable and dry with clear air, particularly in the Khumbu. It is warm enough during the day for light clothing but can drop below freezing at night. In March/April/May it is warmer during the day, particularly at low altitudes. Rhododendrons bloom from February in the valleys through to early June higher up. Intermittent pre-monsoon showers and low altitude haze are possible, but the lack of other trekkers and the spring flowers at this time of year compensate for this. Cold nights and clear skies can still be expected in the mountains.

Altitude
Above 3000m, the air is thinner, the pressure is lower and there is less oxygen available in the atmosphere. Acclimatisation is the process by which the body adapts to these conditions. The key to acclimatisation is a good itinerary with a gradual initial height gain, walking at a slow and steady pace, and increasing fluid intake – drinking at least 4 litres a day is advisable above 3000m. There are lots of tea houses along the way.
Health
If you take care while in Nepal there should be no reason why you do not stay healthy. Frequent hand washing and care with drinking water is the key.

Equipment and clothing
A kit list will be sent with your booking confirmation. Sleeping bags can be supplemented by quilts at most lodges. Down jackets and sleeping bags can be hired in Kathmandu.

International Porter Protection Group High Places has been endorsed by I.P.P.G. This means that we treat our porters fairly, and provide appropriate clothing and medical attention for them. Max load for your kit bag is 15kg.