

# Chitwan Jungle Trek, Nepal



## Highlights

This five-day break offers a real back-to-nature experience on a safari through the jungle. Have a go at bathing an elephant, meet local people when you stay in home-stays, and gaze up at the epic Himalayan scenery on hill treks.

Home to the Himalayas, hillsides dotted with Buddhist prayer flags, and a vast range of tie-dyed hippy clobber. If there was an award for most peaceful place in the world, Nepal would surely be in with a chance of scooping it. Its people are friendly and open, and with 40 different races all sharing the same land, it's got an exotic mix of cultures. You'll find miles and miles of gnarled jungles where tigers roam, and birds like painted snipes and pale-chinned flycatchers flutter their wings. There's only one thing left to say, 'namaste' – or 'welcome'.

Journey right to the heart of the Himalayas with a stay in Nepal's capital, Kathmandu. Packed with temples – most dating back to the 17th century, bustling streets and bazaars, this city kicks things off like a baptism of fire. Then it's out into the wilderness with hill treks where you can gaze up at 180-degree Himalayan views, jungle safaris on elephant-back, and home-stays with locals in Magar and Gurung villages. And last but not least, you'll also have the chance to help wash an elephant – so be prepared to get wet.

## Is it for me?

This is one of those once-in-a-lifetime experiences and would make an out-of-this-world trip for a couple. There won't be stacks of time for privacy as accommodation is a mix of home-stays and jungle lodges, so expect lots of 'together' time. Also, there are a couple of very early mornings – 5.30am to be exact – so don't come on this one if you'd rather be snuggled up in bed till after 9am. And finally, it's probably best if you're a bit of an easy-going type as you'll be meeting all sorts of people – and staying in local houses – so an open-mind and a laid-back attitude is best for this.

## Accommodation

Accommodation is a mix of home-stays and jungle lodges. Obviously, that means there'll be a degree of difference between the three. But even though there'll be no 5-star luxury in the home-stays, they've definitely got to be the best places to stay. After all, it's not often you get to experience a truly different way of life. In terms of food, in Kathmandu you'll have to fend for yourself – but it's a city, so you needn't worry about finding somewhere to satisfy your taste buds. After that, you'll be catered for completely – with a mix of Nepalese and Western-style foods, so there should be something to suit you.

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Hattibang

Early drive to trail head at Hugdi on the Kathmandu – Narayanghat highway. Breakfast along the way. Start trekking uphill to about 1400 meters at Hattibang. This moderate to strenuous trek is picturesque as you pass small villages and behind you is the awesome scenery of the Trishuli river and the mountains in the horizon. Homestay in Magar houses in Hattibang.

### Day 2: Gurung Village

Early rise to walk uphill for about 2 hours to reach Sirauchuli (the highest point in the Chitwan district) at 1945 meters to enjoy the 180 degree view of the Himalayas from Dhaulagiri to Gauri Shankar. Situated in the midhills, this spot also offers majestic views of the vast plains in the south. Locals have it that you can see right upto

Prices from

**320** GBP (5 days) per person

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Mumbai in India (OK, that is a bit far away). After breakfast on the ridge, we walk down to visit the Chepang village of Jyanjala. After a short rest here, we start the up-down (so called Nepali flat) trail to Upardangadi which will take about 4 hours. We do this moderate trek through and excellent trail meandering through forests and grazing fields, with views varying between the Himalayas and the plains of the terai. By afternoon, after the last long descent, we arrive in the village for a well deserved rest. In the early evening we walk up to the Upardang fortress for a stunning sunset, before walking back to our homestays in this Gurung village which is highlighted by a cultural performance by the people of the village (if our group size justifies it).

#### Day 3: Chitwan

After breakfast we bid goodbye to our hosts and start trekking the long walk down to the river and then along the river bed to Shaktikhor. This trek will take about 3 hours maximum. We then transfer to awaiting vehicles to drive to Chitwan. Upon arrival at the jungle lodge, the managers and naturalists will brief you on the activities they have planned. After lunch you will start your jungle activities such as elephant safaris for 2 hours deep into the jungle to experience the wildlife, flora and fauna of the park at close quarters or a bird watching tour will be organized. Dinner and overnight at the jungle lodge.

#### Day 4: Elephant Camp

Wake up call will be at 5:30 am. Tea / Coffee will be served and there will be either an elephant safari or a nature walk. After breakfast canoe ride or a bird watching tour. Lunch at the lodge and after lunch an elephant briefing at the Elephant stables where naturalists will give a lecture on the Asian Elephant. Here you will have an opportunity to witness and participate in the bathing of an elephant. Dinner and overnight at the jungle lodge.

#### Day 5: Farewell

Wake up call at 5:30 am. After Tea / Coffee there will be an early morning elephant safari or nature walk. Breakfast and transfer to waiting vehicle for drive back To Kathmandu.

### Details

#### Getting there

Tribhuvan International Airport is based six kilometres from Kathmandu city centre. Airlines from the Middle East and Asia have regular arrivals and departures here.

#### Price includes

Accommodation, all transport within Nepal, guides, porters, all meals apart from in Kathmandu, trek and safari permits.

#### Typical Duration

5 days

#### Comfort level

Down to earth (hostels, camping, huts)

#### Experience required

A reasonable level of fitness and interest is all that is needed