

Background notes for walks with The Moving Mountains Project in Nepal

Getting there: The usual way to travel to Nepal from New Zealand and Australia is via Bangkok with Thai Airlines or with Singapore Airlines via Singapore. Flights from Europe are usually via the Middle East. Please book your flight to arrive in Kathmandu at least one night before the trip begins, and book to leave no earlier than the morning of the last day of the trip. You may like to arrive a day or two earlier than the trip commences. If so, please let us know: we can meet you at the airport and advise on hotel bookings.

Travel insurance: Please have comprehensive travel insurance for the whole period of the trip, from the date you leave home to the date you return. Your insurance must include medical repatriation and helicopter evacuation. Your travel agent can advise you. Prior to departing, we'll ask you to sign a form confirming you have this.

Degree of difficulty: This is a moderate trek for a walker with good fitness and mountain walking experience however, there are several hard, steep, sustained uphill stretches which require very good endurance. The majority of the walking is between 2000m and 3000m. Two nights are spent at a high altitude of 3660m and there is an opportunity for fitter walkers to take a day trip to the highest point of the walk at 4500m. This is a very high altitude day-walk from which the group returns to 3660m to overnight.

Fitness: To get the most out of the walk, participants need a good level of fitness. It is essential to have undertaken some multi-day backpacking hikes previously as well as being comfortable with basic sleeping conditions. Walkers need to be able to carry a backpack weighing 12-14kg depending on how light they pack. Preparation for the hike should include of an hour of vigorous, sustained aerobic exercise (eg: running, cycling, swimming) a minimum of 4 times a week. This needs to be high intensity exercise: you should be out of breath for the whole hour that you train. The rule of thumb for any hike is the fitter you are, the more you're able to enjoy the experience. A more detailed discussion on fitness is contained in the trip medical form which can be downloaded [here](#).

Clothing requirements: Comfortable hiking clothing and boots, as well as a warm jacket and thermal underwear for nighttime are required. A warm sleeping bag is recommended. For cultural reasons, both women and men are requested not to wear shorts and women should not have bare shoulders or very revealing dress. Please see the Gear List for this walk [here](#).

What you need to carry: Walkers need to be able to carry a sleeping bag, hiking clothes, personal toiletries and 2 litres of water. On our first day of hiking, which is a long, sustained uphill (from 817m-2200m) we can give some of our gear to porters who will walk ahead of us to Nangi. Gear can also be left safely in Pokhara or Nangi. Aim to walk light with a minimum of comfortable clothing in a comfortable backpack.

Visas: Foreign visitors need a visa to enter Nepal and this is obtained easily from the Nepalese embassy or consulate in your country. Australian walkers can download this at www.nepalconsulate.org.au/visaform.html. Send this form in duplicate, 2 passport photos, your passport, a return envelope and AUD\$70. It is recommended to send your passport by registered post and to include a self-addressed registered post envelope for its return. Your travel agent may also be able to help you arrange this. Non-Australians need to check the visa requirements for their nationality,

Vaccinations: There are several vaccinations that are recommended generally for travellers and specifically for travelers to Nepal. If you have been in a developing country in the last 10 years, you may have already have had the required vaccinations. The Moving Mountains Project walks [medical form](#) details the necessary vaccinations. Please visit your local travel health clinic with this form a minimum of 8 weeks before your trip's departure.

Staying healthy: The group will have a comprehensive first aid kit and the trip co-ordinator has wilderness first aid training. Your travel health clinic will recommend a traveller's medical kit. We ask each walker to bring their own traveller's medical kit containing anti-diarrhoeal medicines and instructions on how to take them. You may also want to consider asking your doctor about bringing medicine to counteract the effects of high altitude. Please consult the The Moving Mountains Project walks [medical form](#) for further information.

Food & Water: In Kathmandu and Pokhara we will eat in good restaurants aimed at foreigners. In Beni we will have basic food in a small hotel. In Nangi and the other villages we visit, we will eat mostly as locals do: this means rice, vegetable curry and lentils. Sometimes we'll also enjoy fried flat bread or locally made cheese. On the night in Ghorepani, walkers are able to choose from a wider menu designed for tourists. Little meat is eaten. For lunches and snacks, the guide will be carrying more western-style food: sweets, muesli bars etc. It's important to drink clean water. You will be supplied with filtered and UV treated water each morning before the group sets off and water can be replenished water during the day. Please bring a water bottle or bladder with a 2 litre capacity.

Accommodation: in Kathmandu and Pokhara walkers stay in comfortable hotel rooms with ensuite bathrooms. In Beni accommodation is a basic hotel with shared cold water facilities. In Nangi Village we stay in the "Round House" which has small separate rooms with wooden beds and mattresses, and basic shared cold-water facilities, though it is possible to can boil some hot water for washing. In the other villages walkers stay in villagers' homes or small, simple

lodges. One night is spent in a low-key tourist lodge in the mountain village of Ghorepani. Please be aware that overnight accommodation will sometimes be on mattresses on the floor. There are rarely flush toilets or running water sometimes there is no privacy for sleeping. We ask you to be patient and flexible.

Money: In Kathmandu and Pokhara, Visa cards can be used in ATM/Cash Machines to withdraw money from foreign accounts in local currency. It is also a good idea to bring some US dollars to exchange. Travellers' Cheques are not widely accepted.

Language: Many Nepalis speak very good English, and most have a few words. Our local guide from Nangi village speaks excellent English and will be happy to interpret for you if you would like to communicate with a non-English speaker. You may be interested in learning a few words of Nepali. If so, a good phrase book Lonely Planet's Nepali Phrase Book (ISBN-10: 1740591925) available online at www.lonelyplanet.com, and from good book shops.

What else to bring: You may like to bring some tiny gifts for the hosts whose homes you will stay in on some nights. Things like little packets of tea bags or tiny pots of honey make good gifts. Anything that's light to carry and is attractive or useful would be appreciated. You might also like to bring a few postcards of the place you live or photos of your family to show people. Pens, coloured pencils, exercise books or stickers are appreciated by children. In addition, if you have any second-hand books for children or teenagers that you would like to donate to the schools, please talk to us. If you can bring them to Nepal, we can arrange to have them carried to the village schools in the areas we visit.

Background info: For background information, see The Moving Mountains Project website and especially the Nepal Trip notes which you can download from the Nepal page. Follow the link to the Himanchal Education Foundation (www.himanchal.org) from the Links page on our website to read more about the educational projects we support under 'The School' tab. If you click on 'The Village' tab, you can access background information about Nangi Village and the area.