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Nepal Community Volunteers

Adventure Relaxation Culture

Trip Name: Nepal Community Volunteers **Trip Code:** NECV **Duration:** From 2 weeks

Trip Highlights

- Teach children in a local school, children's resource centre or childcare centre.
- Teach English to monks in a Buddhist monastery.
- Explore the beauty of Nepal, home to some of the highest mountains in the world
- Visit beautiful Chitwan National Park

Overview

Choose to volunteer in Nepal and there are a variety of volunteer projects you can get involved in. Make a real contribution to the lives of deprived youngsters. Or live in a Buddhist monastery.

You'll be living and eating with a Nepali family so you'll have opportunities to experience the culture that you wouldn't have if you were in a hostel. You'll also be travelling to your volunteer place of work by foot or on a bus – more great ways to get a feel for the Nepal. If you want, you can have some typical Nepali clothing made especially for you so you won't even look out of place!

Discover Nepal. You'll have plenty of time to explore. It is full of breath-taking and spectacular natural views. This is Himalaya country – enough said.

Destination Info

Nepal is a country of superlatives. It's in the Himalayas and the country has eight of the world's 10 tallest mountains and 240 peaks over 20,000 feet. And, of course, it is home to Mount Everest, the highest point on earth (let's give it its Nepalese name: Sagarmatha).

Itinerary

This is your introduction to Nepal - its culture and language – and to the project you'll be working on.

After arriving into Kathmandu your first few nights will be in a private house on the outskirts of Kathmandu where you can relax, shake off the jet lag and meet your fellow volunteers. You'll spend the next few days learning about the volunteer project you've chosen, getting your head round a few language basics and finding out something about where you are. You'll also meet and move in with your host family and get comfortable with them.

Teach children in a local school, children's resource centre or childcare centre – in Chitwan, Kathmandu, Langtang or Pokhara

It's really satisfying teaching these kids a new language. You'll find them enthusiastic and friendly and funny and eager to learn and you'll come away feeling that you've achieved something good.

You can also tackle basic science and maths and get involved in sports and games. You don't need any teaching experience, but you do need to be a creative and patient sort of person and, of course, to like working with youngsters. We'll help with a basic syllabus and some tips, but beyond that it's largely up to you. The more resourceful and inventive you are, the more the children – and you – will get out of it.

Please note: While we will always take your preference on the type and location of volunteering into account this is dependent on availability and the needs of the various projects at the time of your stay.

Teach English to monks in a Buddhist monastery – in Kathmandu

This is something totally different – just too good to miss if you're at all interested in Buddhism. You'll not only be working with the monks, but living with them and you'll have the opportunity to immerse yourself in Buddhist culture on this unique volunteering experience.

You don't need any teaching experience. As a volunteer you'll be working with intelligent and educated adults, so you should have good written and verbal English and you'll need to be flexible and patient.

Please note: While we will always take your preference on the type and location of volunteering into account this is dependent on availability and the needs of the various projects at the time of your stay.

You'll arrange the precise schedule for your volunteering projects in Nepal with the people you're working with. There will be plenty of time for you to explore this amazing country and get to know its people and something about how they live.

The trip includes a three-day visit to Chitwan – location of Nepal's first national park. If you're lucky you'll get to see some of the rare animal species native to that part of the world – Bengal tiger, gharial, Asian rhinoceros, leopard, Mugger crocodile and rock pythons. You can also do some canoeing, meet some baby elephants in a sanctuary, walk in the jungle and visit some Tharu communities.

Accommodation

During your orientation you will stay in a private house on the outskirts of Kathmandu. The rooms will be basic but you will have a comfortable bed, Western style toilet and shower, with hot water.

You will live with a local family in the village relevant to your placement. If you would prefer to stay in hotel accommodation this can be arranged but will be at extra cost.

Programme Services and Facilities

Internet

Access to the Internet will depend on where you are based and which project you choose. As most projects are located in and around a major town, you should have no problem going to an Internet café- of which there will be plenty, especially in Kathmandu (try the Thamel area!).

Telephone

The international telephone access code for Nepal is +977.

To place an outgoing call, direct dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, +49 for Germany, followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164 / +49 69 222226 475.

Internet cafes are also a good place to find cheap rates on International Calls, easy, as before, when you are in Kathmandu. We also recommend purchasing a Real Gap SIM card, or a local Nepali SIM card, which you should be able to use in any unblocked handset. However, please bear in mind that you may not be able to get a mobile phone signal in all areas.

Laundry

You will have to wash your own clothes whilst on the programme; therefore we suggest that you take washing

powder with you.

Electricity

Staying in hostels and with host families you should have access to electricity sockets throughout your stay for charging and the use of electrical appliances.

Meals

In a typical placement you will stay with a local family and eat Nepali food twice a day - 9am breakfast/lunch and 7pm dinner. Tea is served in the morning and also in the afternoon. You may also have the opportunity to get together with other volunteers and share your experiences. You will be able to travel to nearby towns to purchase things for daily use and could travel to other areas of Nepal for longer if you wish.

During your arrival orientation days and your trip to Chitwan National Park meals and drinks are not included, please budget approximately 1,250 Nepalese Rupees per day cover this.

What's Included

- Airport Pick-up and drop off
- Most food and accommodation
- Orientation
- Transport to and from the project
- Three-day/two-night trip to Chitwan

What's Not Included

- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Visa
- Food and drink on trip to Chitwan and during orientation days
- National Park Entrance Fees
- Sightseeing entrance fees

Additional Information

Orientation

The day after you arrive you will have a 2 to 4 day orientation depending on the duration of your programme.

This orientation will include:

- Language lessons
- Cultural issues / gender issues
- Placement information
- Teaching English
- Nepalese Food
- Sightseeing to Durbar Square, Pashupatinath, Buddhanath and Sayambhunath

You will have three hours of language lessons daily and a full orientation about Nepalese culture and the project you are about to embark upon. You will also be taken on a tour of the local sites including: Durbar square, Pashupatinath, Buddhanath, and Sayambhunath, Patan Durbar square and Budanilkantha. Entrance fees are not included.

Meals during your orientation will be typical Nepalese fare, the perfect introduction to a culture!

During the orientation you will also have the opportunity to have some traditional local Nepalese clothing made for your programme. This is not essential but we strongly recommend you take advantage of this opportunity in order to gain the respect of the staff and locals on the programme.

Following your orientation in Kathmandu you will head to your placement. If you are based in Chitwan or Pokhara for your volunteer work you will take the tourist bus from Kathmandu which will take between 6-8 hours depending traffic.

What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and, therefore, you may not need all of the listed items on your travels nor is it exhaustive.

Personal Admin

- Photocopies of important papers such as passport, airline tickets and insurance documents

General

- Sleeping Bag
- Day bag / rucksack (for excursions)
- A torch
- Mobile phone
- Camera & batteries
- Telephone charger with a two pin adaptor plug
- Playing cards for free time
- Diary – you will have so many amazing experiences to remember

- CD walkman and speakers (if you wish)
- Tissues
- Plastic bags
- Snacks (cup of soups, biscuits etc)
- Pocket-knife
- Towel
- Copy of medical certificates/qualification if on the health care option

Clothing

- Walking shoes / trainers – sufficient for walking in forests
- Flip Flops
- Work gloves (if on the construction option)
- A hat to protect you from the sun
- Rain coat
- Clothes. Long sleeve shirts and trousers are great.
- Beachwear

Medical Kit

- Small medical kit containing plasters, medicine for diarrhoea, head ache tablets, anti- histamine cream and any medication you will need.
- Mosquito repellent
- Leach repellent
- Contraception including condoms
- Biological soap
- Antibacterial soap gel (does not need water to rinse off)
- Travel wash for clothes

Please note: For those volunteering in the Langtang area please be aware that, although warm during the day, this region gets very cold during the nights and so volunteers should bring warm clothing and an appropriate sleeping bag. You will also need sun screen, lots of insect repellent and iodine or water purification tablets.

Minimum Age

Minimum age 18 years old, maximum decided on participant's health.

Flights

Your flight to Nepal should arrive at Kathmandu Airport on your programme start date, and your return flight should be arranged for your programme end date.

To book your flights, please contact your Travel Advisor who can look into the best flight quote for you.

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your online account or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

FAQs

1. **Can I take part with another person?**

Although most people travel on their own, we can definitely organise for two to travel and volunteer together at the same project.

2. **How much spending money will I need?**
   Not much really meals and accommodation are included for most of your time in Nepal so roughly £50-75 a week for incidentals.

3. **Where will I live?**
   Your host family will be in a location close to your placement.

4. **Will meals be prepared?**
   Typically you will eat Nepali food with your family twice a day - breakfast and dinner.

5. **Do I need to take a sleeping bag?**
   No, you won't need to take a sleeping bag.

6. **Do I need to take a mosquito net?**
   Mosquito nets are needed from March to August, however if it is easier you can buy a net when you are in Nepal as they are cheaper out there.

7. **Will there be a safe/safety deposit box available?**
   Yes, you will be able to leave it with the team in Nepal and they will look after it for you. You can either leave your valuable in their house, office or their safe in the bank which is next to their office.

DBS

This trip requires a Police Check to be carried out - please contact us for further information on how to do this.

Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

You will be assigned a personal travel advisor who will co-ordinate your program with you. Feel free to contact them at any time before you go, or when you are on your travels. They will provide you with competent assistance and help with any questions or advice you may need during your stay.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa,

insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

Money Matters

The national currency of Nepal is the rupee (Rs) and is divided in 100 subunits called paisa (p). Coin denominations come in units of 1, 5 and 10 rupees and 50, 25 and 10 paisa. Banknotes are in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 25, 50, 100, 500 and 1000 Rs.

Changing foreign money outside Solu Khumbu and on the Annapurna treks can be very difficult, if not impossible and changing large bank notes in more rural areas can also be very difficult. It's always advised to carry some small value coins when travelling especially when using taxis. ATMs are widely available in towns and cities and accept most major cards. However access to money in the mountains is still very limited so ensure you take enough cash (coins as well) to last the entire length of your trek. Traveller's cheques in US dollar and Sterling pounds are the most accepted but again very hard to change in rural areas and on treks.

Example typical costs are as follows:

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant 3.38 $
Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) 3.27 $
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) 0.37 $
Water (0.33 litre bottle) 0.31 $

(Prices quoted in US Dollars)

Passports and Visas

You should ensure that you have a full passport that is valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information provided below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

All foreign travellers, apart from Indian nationals, must get a visa to travel to Nepal.

Tourist visa are obtained in your local embassy or on arrival to Nepal but it is advised to obtain the visa before you travel. Tourist visas are available from 3 to 6 months. Indian visas become valid from the date of issue note the

date or entry. Please ensure you take this into consideration when applying and calculate the optimum time to submit your application. For further information on all visas please contact your nearest Nepalese embassy.

Cultural Considerations

As you will be experiencing a different culture, please ensure you respect the values and traditions of the Nepalese.

The Nepalese do not shake hands like Westerners when greeting each other. Instead they place their palms together with fingers up in front of their chests or chin and say “namaste” or “Namaskar” to superiors.

Within families, the father tends to be the head of the family, so they are served first at mealtime. Women tend to be subordinate to men and do not have as much access to education, economic resources and political power. However, women’s status tends to be somewhat better amongst the Tibeto-Nepalese community, as oppose to the Indo-Nepalese community. Women tend to work harder and longer than men, taking care of the household. In contrast, women of a higher status in Nepal have maids to work for them.

Unless you are going to a formal event, wearing informal clothing is acceptable.

Smoking, Alcohol

Smoking and drinking is acceptable in Vietnam and readily available. However, please respect other people. Smoking is not permissible in volunteer apartments or the host families’ homes. Drinking is only permissible in moderation and must not impact upon any volunteer work you undertake. While we want you to have fun in your free time, antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated.

Bathroom Facilities

You will experience a range of different shower and toilet facilities. Unless you are staying in a hotel you will rarely have hot water. The cool water takes a little getting used to but I’m sure you’ll find it refreshing after a hot and humid day. Toilets will be a combination of western and Asian. Remember to put all toilet tissue in the bin provided and not in the toilet.

Whist on excursions you will notice that many places do not have a western toilet and will have a typical Asian toilet; again this is all part of the Vietnamese culture. Also, many places do not have soap in the bathrooms. It is a good idea to take a small bottle of soap gel and keep it in your day bag. This is an antibacterial gel that you don’t need to rinse off. These are available in chemists in the travel section.

Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary

depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

Safety

Always keep your personal items such as passport, money and camera with you and in a safe place. Always walk around in groups and never go out alone after dark.

We recommend you bring a padlock for your bag and lock it at all times when not in use. Also a money belt/pouch is very useful.

If you do go somewhere alone, then ensure you inform someone of your whereabouts, and that you have the contact details of your accommodation with you. When getting a taxi, please ensure it is a registered taxi service.

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK, American and Australian customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: www.fco.gov.uk
USA: www.travel.state.gov
Australia: www.smartraveller.gov.au

ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card.

Language Guide

The language is Nepali, however there are 20 other languages all divided into different dialects. English is one of their main spoken languages.

We suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to.

English - *Nepali*
Hello/goodbye - *Namaste*
Thank you - *Dhanyabad (said when something special, not in shop)*
Sorry - *Maaf 'o*
Please (give me) - *Dinuhos (pronounced Dinoos)*
Please take - *Linuhos (pronounced Linoos).*
Please eat - *Khanuhos (pronounced Khanoos)*
Me, he, she - *Ma, wa, uni*
You - *Topai (timi when talking to children)*
Excuse Me - *Hajur?*
How are you? - *Topailai kosto chha?*
Yes - *'A, or (yes, it is) 'O*
I have - *Cha*
No (it isn't) - *Oina*
No (I don't have) - *Chhaina*
OK - *Theekcha*
Where..? - *Kaha? or Kaha cha? (pronounced as a nasal Khaan)*
How much (cost) - *Koti Paisa bayo?*
I don't like - *Par daina (better: malai man par daina).*
I don't want - *Chain daina [pronounced cha-en di na]*
Slow - *Bistare*
Quick (or also early) - *Chito*
Come - *Aunuhos (pronounced Ownoos)*
Go - *Jaun (pronounced jao or jow)*
It's expensive - *Mongo cha*
It's cheap - *Shwasto cha*
Ill - *Birami*
Water - *Pani*
Food - *Khanna*
I feel happy - *Malai Kurshi lag cha*
I feel pain/hurt - Malai dookha lag cha
I feel hungry - *Malai bog lag cha*
I feel thirsty - Malai teerkha lag cha
I really love Nepal - *Malai Nepal-lai dhere maya lag cha*
Which country do you come from? - *Topai koon desh vara aunu bayeko?*
Hot - *Tato (object, food etc.) Gorum (weather, feeling) piro (spicy chilly hot).*
Cold - *Cheeso (object, drink etc.) Jaaro (weather, feeling)*

Useful Phrases
How can I get to Kathmandu? - *Kosare Kathmandu-ma jaane?*
Is it far from here? - *Yo bato koti Tara chha?*
Does your taxi have a meter? - *Topaiko taxi ma meter chha?*
What time is it? - *Koti Baji 'o?*
I'm a Vegetarian - *Ma sakahari hu' 13*

Numbers
Nought - *Sun-ya*
One - *Ek*
Two - *Dui (pronounced dooee)*
Three - *Tin (pronounced teen)*

Four - *Char*
Five - *Panch*
Six - *Chha (a more emphatic and shorter CHA than four)*
Seven - *Sat*
Eight - *Ath (pronounced At)*
Nine - *Nau (pronounced like English No)*
Ten - *Das*
Twenty - *Bis (pronounced beess)*
One hundred - *Soi*
two Hundred - *Dui se*
One thousand rupees - *Ek 'azar rupeeya*

Addressing people
A younger man - *Bhai (literally younger brother)*
An older man - *Dai (literally elder brother)*
A younger woman - *Bahini (pronounced baini) (literally younger sister)*
An older woman - *Didi (literally elder sister)*
Calling attention of an older man - *Bhaaje?*
Calling attention of an older woman - *Bhajai?*

Food & Drink

A typical dish in Nepal is Dal-bhat, a dish made out of pulses and lentils and served with rice. Meat is not commonly consumed due to the fact that Hindus do not eat beef and Muslims do not eat pork, however it's unlikely that you won't be able to find any. Cuisine is quite similar to Indian in terms of vegetable curries and generally meat, eggs and fish are seen as a treat. In tourist areas such as Thamel in Kathmandu, you will find a range of Western food such as pizza and pasta as well as Indian and possibly Tibetan food establishments.

Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. However, although businesses and government offices are closed on public holidays, tourist attractions and shops are almost never closed. The main impact on the tourist of these holidays is the increased competition for travel and accommodation from Nepalese who use long weekends to get away from the big city.

To view a list of the public holidays for Nepal, please see the link below:
www.worldtravelguide.net/nepal/public-holidays

Weather

Nepal has two monsoons per year. The dry season runs from October to May and the wet from June to September. Summer is May to September with temperatures reaching 30 degrees. Even in the winter months from October to April, the bright sunny days can reach 20 degrees but plummets at night.

Time

Nepal is 5 hours 45 minutes ahead of GMT.

Electricity

Electricity in Mozambique runs on 220 volts, 50Hz. Outlets across Nepal generally accept the following two plug types;

Three round pins arranged in a triangle

or

Two round pins

Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of reommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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