

# Nepal

## Through the Eyes of the Living Goddess



In this journey we will explore Nepal, experiencing the country through the lives of local women. We will meet female entrepreneurs who have succeeded in a patriarchal society and women who have had the strength to survive human trafficking. We will then move to the hillside to trek through the spectacular Himalayas where we will meet mothers of local village groups and learn about the Living Goddess Kumari. Eye opening and thought provoking this trip shows Nepal from a whole new perspective.



### Recommended itinerary:

Culture shock rating: 

**Day 1: Depart UK** Fly from London to Nepal on an overnight flight.

Physical rating: 

**Day 2: Arrive Nepal / Kathmandu** We will be met at the airport by our Guide who will take us to our hotel in Kathmandu to freshen up and relax.

**Day 3: Days for Girls Centre and Yala Button Factory** This morning we will enjoy a tour of some of the highlights of Kathmandu city featuring the world famous Durbar Square, Swayambhunath Temple, countless Buddhist Chaityas and experiencing the thrill of a rickshaw ride! We will then move on to visit the Days for Girls Centre in Kathmandu. This not-for-profit seeks to provide all women and girls access to culturally, physically and environmentally hygienic solutions to menstrual hygiene through the distribution of their Days for Girls kits. We will take part in a tour of the centre and hear first hand from staff the role that Days for Girls has in Nepalese society plus take part in building our own Days for Girls kits. After lunch we will visit the Yala Button Factory, a local women-run factory, where we will have a chance to speak to the employees to learn about their roles, as well as watching the craftsmanship involved in the process. The factory is located in the centre of Patan, an area renowned for its bustling community of artisans.

**Day 4: Women Trafficking and Empowerment** Today we will visit a local not-for-profit organisation which works with women who have fallen victim to trafficking in Nepal. It is estimated that around 7000 Nepali women and girls have become victims of trafficking each year, making it a huge problem for the country. This not-for-profit helps to rehabilitate women and reunite them with their families. We will have the opportunity to meet and talk to some of the women who have been helped by the organisation, as well as those who work for it, to learn more about what they do. *[Please note: we understand that this is an emotional and thought provoking visit and could cause students some distress, however, after much debate, we decided to include the visit in our itinerary. The focus of this trip is to learn about the lives of local women living in Nepal and this is a serious issue and threat that these women face. Our intention is for students to see that sometimes life can be incredibly difficult but that there are many things we can do to help people who find themselves in situations like these. We hope that the group will come away inspired by the strength of character that these women have shown.]*

In the afternoon we will meet a local female entrepreneur who has successfully established her own business. It will be a chance to listen to the challenges she has faced in the highly patriarchal society of Nepal, balancing her roles as business woman, mother, daughter-in-law and wife.

**Day 5: Fly to Pokhara / Begin Trekking** After breakfast we will transfer to the domestic airport for the short flight to Pokhara. Upon arrival we will drive through the picturesque valley to Nayapul, from where we will continue our journey through the Nepalese Himalayas on foot. Our goal will be Tikhedhunga, with stops along the way to enjoy the scenery and a well deserved lunch!

**Day 6: Trek from Tikhedhunga to Ghorepani** Our trek today will take around six hours. We will pass through the villages of Ulleri and Banthanti, magnificent oak and rhododendron forests, sparkling streams and impressive bridges. After our exertions, we will arrive in Ghorepani to be rewarded with the spectacular panorama the area offers.

**Day 7: Poon Hill Sunrise and Trek to Tadpani** This morning we will rise early for a stunning climb to Poon Hill with the hope of catching the sunrise over the Himalayas. From here we will continue to trek onwards to Banthani before reaching Tadapani, meaning 'far water'; the village water supply is not close and it takes porters more than half an hour to fetch loads of water.

**Day 8: Trek from Tadpani to Ghandruk** Today we will enjoy a gentle descent and short walk of around three hours to reach the Ghandruk, a village of the Gurung people. The Gurung people are known for their distinctive dialect, culture, costume and lifestyle and Ghandruk is also home to many soldiers from the Gurkha regiments. As well as enjoying the scenery, we will have the opportunity to meet with the local mothers' group, which has created an informal saving and credit group, and has unified to ensure that women are informed and have voices. They collect money for the group by selling produce, creating handicrafts, household items or performing events. It will be a fascinating opportunity to listen to their view points and learn about their way of life.

**Day 9: Trek from Ghandruk to Nayapul / Drive to Pokhara** This morning we will leave Ghandruk through terraced fields to the Syauli Bazaar. From here the trail follows the Modi River until Nayapul where we will meet our support vehicles for the short drive to Pokhara on the banks of Phewa Tai Lake. This backpacker base is more relaxed than Kathmandu and we will enjoy the afternoon relaxing and exploring the town after our trek.

**Day 10: Kathmandu City Tour** Today, after an early breakfast, we will fly back to Kathmandu for a farewell tour of the city. Our first stop will be Bhaktapur, one of the oldest cities in the world. Bhaktapur is known as the 'open museum' and the Bhaktapur Durbar Square contains countless temples and architectural show pieces. It is also the home of the living goddess Kumari. In this tradition a pre-pubescent girl is selected from the Shakya caste or Bajracharya clan of the Nepalese Newari community and is revered and worshipped by some of the country's Hindu and Nepali Buddhists. It is certainly an interesting tradition to hear about. As well as the beautiful heritage we will be able to see the everyday lives of local people, especially the artisan potters. After our explorations we can cool off with some Juju Dhau, a speciality, sweetened yoghurt from Bhaktapur.

**Day 11: Depart Nepal** This morning we will transfer to the airport to wave goodbye to Nepal and our Trip Leader ready to board our return flight to the UK.

*Important information:*  
It is important to realise that the itinerary needs to be flexible. While every effort will be made to follow the above schedule, in the event of political problems, airline schedule changes or natural events, we will do our best to make your trip as enjoyable and hassle-free as possible, but it is important to EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED and be prepared to accept some slight changes. Relax and have faith in your guides.

 **DAYS FOR GIRLS** This trip can include a session working alongside Days for Girls, a grass roots organisation aimed at giving every woman and girl access to proper feminine hygiene products and health advice. For more information look on our website: [www.thestc.co.uk/travel/days-for-girls](http://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/days-for-girls)



**The School**  
Travel Consultancy

For more information and a detailed quote, please contact us:  
**telephone:** 01392 660056  
**email:** [schools@thestc.co.uk](mailto:schools@thestc.co.uk)  
**website:** [www.thestc.co.uk](http://www.thestc.co.uk)

