**GORKHA**

Gorkha is the original home of the Shah dynasty that ousted the Malla kings from the Kathmandu valley, paving the way for a united, modern Nepal.

# GORKHA

The name by which Nepali people first became world famous is Gorkha (the British called the Nepali soldiers they recruited, Gurkhas). Gorkha is the name of the kingdom from where the Shah dynasty hailed. The Nepal of today was once divided into dozens of small kingdoms until King Prithvi Narayan Shah began his conquest of neighboring states. He then captured the valley kingdoms and moved his capital to Kantipur (Kathmandu’s former name) in 1769. The Shah rulers continued the drive to bring all the smaller kingdoms under their rule until Nepal became one unified country.

Gorkha’s attraction is the historic old Durbar, the original palace of the Shah dynasty which has been maintained well and is the major tourist destination. Perched on a hilltop, the palace also commands a sweeping view of the surroundings. Many trekkers start the great [Manaslu](https://www.welcomenepal.com/places-to-see/manaslu.html)circuit from Gorkha town while also enjoying the sights of the historic remains of an old dynasty and culture of the local populace.

The two major ethnic groups that populate Gorkha are Gurungs and Magars, who have earned a reputation for bravery in the two World Wars, winning Victoria Crosses from the British government. But it is only in the battlefield that they displayed their fierce attribute, remaining a friendly people in normal circumstances with a reputation for excellent hospitality. “The Honey Hunters of Nepal”, a popular documentary made by Eric Valli and Diane Summers was shot in Gorkha where the local people still continue the practice of collecting wild honey.

The town of Gorkha is a six hour drive from Kathmandu and has a number of decent hotels and resorts catering to tourists. There are regular buses leaving for Gorkha from the bus park in Gongabhu, Ring Road, Kathmandu.