



Hidden Gems of the Kathmandu Valley: Culture, Crafts, and Nature (7N/8D)



Off we go- touchdown in Kathmandu

This curated journey focuses on the cultural and creative soul of the Kathmandu Valley, offering an immersive experience that blends local heritage, art, and nature while carrying immense benefits for the community. The trip begins with a grounding sound healing session and dinner at [Avata](#), a wellness studio in Kathmandu. You will explore the traditional town of [Bungamati](#) with a guided tour with a local and through hands-on cultural activities before heading to [Kirtipur](#), where they'll cook momos with women from the local community. The experience continues with a traditional calligraphy session in [Ranjana Lipi](#), followed by a peaceful stay in [Namobuddha](#). From there, you will be transferred to [Nagarkot](#), where you learn the art of tapari (leaf plate) and batti (cotton wick) making. The following day includes morning yoga and a scenic hike to Jalpa Devi Temple, capped with a cooking session hosted by local families. The final day features a cultural immersion in [Bhaktapur](#), where you will try your hand at traditional mask painting before returning to Kathmandu. This is slow, meaningful travel at its best—ideal for guests who appreciate culture, creativity, and connecting with communities.

Highlights:

- Experience the rich ‘veiled’ Newari culture and tradition in Bungamati, engage with local artisans, and learn about wood carving and farming.
- Explore Kirtipur with local hosts, learn Ranjana Lipi script, and enjoy a local Aila (liquor) tasting while knowing the efforts to preserve this ancient script.
- Participate in a hands-on cooking class that has joined the community women together by preparing momos, a popular Nepali delicacy.
- Experience the serene atmosphere of Namobuddha surrounded by pine forests and panoramic Himalayan views, enriched by the spiritual presence of the sacred Namobuddha Monastery.
- Learn to make Tapari (leaf plate) and Batti (cotton wick) from community members of Nagakort.
- Practice Hatha Yoga, followed by a hike to the spiritual Jalpa Devi Temple guided by local guide
- Explore the ancient town of Bhaktapur, known for its rich Newar culture, intricate wood and brick architecture, and vibrant temples
- Engage in a mask-painting workshop and craft your own souvenir guided by a skilled local artisan.

Trip Itinerary:

Day 1 Arrival

Activities : International Airport Arrival Transfer, Sound Healing and Dinner at [Avata Wellness](#)

Accommodation : [Traditional Comfort](#) or Similar

Meals Included : Dinner

Welcome to Nepal!! On your arrival at the airport in Kathmandu, you will be received with a placard having your name in the arrival hall. The luggage will be loaded in the car and you will be transferred to the hotel in Kathmandu. Traditional comfort is a Travellife certified Hotel with an ambiance curated to reflect the traditions of Nepal.

After check-in, you can take the time to freshen up before you move to [Avata Wellness](#), for a sound healing session to recover from the jet lag. Avata is one of the best wellness centers in Kathmandu with a serene environment, trained practitioners and instructors.

[Sound healing](#) is an ancient practice that uses vibrations from instruments like singing bowls, gongs, and chants to promote well-being. Rooted in Himalayan and Tibetan traditions, it aims to restore balance by harmonizing the body's energy centers.

The sound healing is followed by a healthy dinner at [Nourish](#) by Avata.

Thereafter, you will be transferred back to your hotel.

Day 2 Bungamati

Activities : Exploring [Bungamati](#), Traditional Newari wood carving, Khokhana Sightseeing

Drive Duration : 45 minutes approx.

Accommodation : [Kirtipur Community Homestay](#) [shift to hotel on request]

Meals Included : Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today, you'll head to Bungamati, a traditional Newari town renowned for its centuries-old woodcarving heritage. [Newari woodcarving](#) is deeply rooted in both

spiritual symbolism and architectural design, shaping the identity of temples, homes, and courtyards across the valley. During your guided walk, you'll visit the revered [Rato Machhindranath Temple](#), an important pilgrimage site, along with several local **viharas (Buddhist monasteries)** and **neighborhood temples** that reflect the town's unique blend of Hindu and Buddhist traditions. You'll also step into artisan workshops for a hands-on woodcarving session, learning the skill and its cultural significance directly from master craftsmen.

A short drive will take you to [Khokana](#), another charming Newari village known for its mustard oil production and traditional lifestyle.

Tonight, you'll stay at the [Kirtipur Community Homestay](#), hosted in modern concrete homes that reflect contemporary Nepali living. While the houses are more recent in design, the village walk will take you past beautifully preserved traditional Newari buildings, offering a glimpse into the area's architectural legacy. Clean rooms, hygienic kitchens, and warmly prepared home-cooked meals ensure comfort, but as always, it's the heartfelt hospitality that leaves the strongest impression.

Activities : [Kirtipur Town Excursion with Hosts and Cooking Momo](#) with Community Women

Drive Duration : 30 mins approx.

Accommodation : Kirtipur Community Homestay [shift to hotel on request]

Meals Included : Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today, you'll explore the culturally rich town of [Kirtipur](#), a historic Newari settlement known for its elevated views and timeless charm. Guided by your local hosts, you'll visit some of its most cherished landmarks, including the ancient [Bagh Bhairab Temple](#), the hilltop [Umamaheshwar Temple](#), and the serene [Chilanco Stupa](#)—each revealing layers of Kirtipur's deep spiritual and architectural heritage.

Later in the evening, you'll take part in a hands-on [momo-making class](#) with community women. Learn to prepare these beloved Nepali dumplings from scratch—mixing fillings, folding dough, and sharing stories in a relaxed, friendly environment.

Day 3 Kirtipur

Day 4 Namobuddha

Activities	: Ranjana Lipi Experience , Transfer to Namobuddha and Evening at Leisure
Drive Duration	: 1 hour 15 mins approx.
Accommodation	: Namobuddha Resort
Meals Included	: Breakfast, Lunch

The day begins with a serene [Ranjana Lipi workshop](#), where you'll learn the art of writing this ancient Newari script—traditionally used in religious texts and temple inscriptions. Guided by an experienced instructor, you'll practice with bamboo pens and ink while discovering the script's cultural and historical importance. As part of the experience, enjoy a sampling of [Aila](#), a traditional Newari spirit, and a celebratory [Samay Baji](#) meal, featuring a variety of dishes that hold ceremonial significance in Newari culture.

After the workshop, you will be transferred to Namobuddha. Your stay tonight is at the [Namobuddha Resort](#), an eco-conscious retreat nestled in nature. With its fresh air, organic gardens, and tranquil setting, it's the perfect place to slow down and recharge.

Day 5 Nagarkot

Activities	: Transfer to Nagarkot , Experience Tapari and Batti Making
Drive Duration	: 1 hour 30 mins approx.
Accommodation	: Nagarkot Community Homestay [shift to hotel on request]
Meals Included	: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today, visit the [Namobuddha Monastery](#), a revered Tibetan Buddhist site set atop a peaceful hilltop. The monastery offers a serene atmosphere with stunning Himalayan views, making it a spiritual and scenic highlight of any visit. Afterwards, you will travel to [Nagarkot Community Homestay](#), operated by the close-knit Banstola community, where the charm of their local traditions, stunning Himalayan views, and authentic cultural exchanges await you.

Day 6 Nagarkot

Upon arrival in Nagarkot, you'll be welcomed by your hosts with traditional garlands and heartfelt hospitality. After settling in, you'll explore the village and take part in hands-on activities with local women, [making tapari](#)- biodegradable leaf plates used in everyday and ritual meals, and [batti](#), cotton wicks prepared for prayer lamps. These simple yet meaningful crafts connect you with everyday cultural practices that often go unnoticed but carry deep traditional value.

Tonight, you'll stay at the [Nagarkot Community Homestay](#), where each home features modest but clean, with basic amenities and warm, home-cooked meals. It's a place where nature, simplicity, and genuine connection come together to create a memorable stay.

Activities : Morning [Hatha Yoga Session](#), Hike to Jalpa Devi Temple, Cooking with Hosts

Hike Duration : 2 hrs approx.

Accommodation : [Nagarkot Community Homestay](#)

Meals Included : Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Your day begins with a peaceful [Hatha yoga session](#) at **Shanti Danda**, led by a local instructor and set against the backdrop of quiet hills and crisp morning air. This mindful practice helps you stretch, breathe, and center yourself before the day's adventures. After a hearty breakfast prepared by your hosts, you'll set off on a hike to **Jalpa Devi Temple**. Located at one of Nagarkot's highest points, this hilltop shrine holds deep spiritual significance for the local community and offers sweeping views of the surrounding valley and hills.

In the evening, return to the homestay to join your hosts in the kitchen. You'll take part in **cooking a traditional dinner**, using local produce—some of it freshly picked from the backyard garden. As you chop, stir, and season side-by-side with your host family, you'll learn about Nepali home cooking, regional spices, and the rhythms of daily life in the hills.

Your night is spent again at the [Nagarkot Community Homestay](#), where clean rooms, home-cooked meals, and the warm, grounded hospitality of your hosts continue to make you feel at home amidst the hills.

Day 7
Bhaktapur-
Kathmandu

Activities : [Bhaktapur](#) Sightseeing, Mask Painting, Transfer to Kathmandu Hotel

Drive Duration : 1 hr 45 mins approx.

Accommodation : [Traditional Comfort](#) or Similar

Meals Included : Breakfast

Today, you'll explore [Bhaktapur](#), one of the Kathmandu Valley's three ancient kingdoms and a living museum of Newari heritage. As you walk through its cobbled lanes and admire the intricately carved palaces, pagodas, and courtyards of [Bhaktapur Durbar Square](#), you'll gain a deep appreciation for the city's medieval craftsmanship and spiritual symbolism that continues to shape its identity.

Before returning to Kathmandu, you'll stop in [Thimi](#), a nearby artisan town famous for its vibrant pottery and ritual masks. Here, you'll join a [mask painting workshop](#) with a local artist. After a short introduction to the cultural meaning behind these traditional masks—often used in festivals and sacred dances—you'll learn basic painting techniques and patterns. You'll take home your own hand-painted creation as a colorful reminder of your time in the valley.

Your evening ends back in [Kathmandu](#) at [Traditional Comfort](#) or a similar heritage-inspired hotel, offering a calm and cozy retreat after a day immersed in culture and creativity.

DAY 8
KATHMANDU

Activities : Departure

Accommodation :

Meals Included : Breakfast

On your final day in Nepal, you will be picked up from your hotel three hours before your flight. Please make sure to double-check your belongings—especially your passport and travel documents—before leaving.

Thank you for journeying with us and taking the time to explore Nepal's culture, communities, and natural beauty. If you're considering extending your stay, we're happy to recommend a few post-trip experiences to help you continue your adventure in a meaningful way. Safe travels, and we hope to welcome you back again someday!

Land Package Cost Based On:

1 paying pax group: USD 0000.00 per person

2 paying pax group: USD 0000.00 per person

3 paying pax group: USD 0000.00 per person

4 paying pax group: USD 0000.00 per person

5 paying pax group: USD 0000.00 per person

Single Room Supplement Surcharge: USD 00.00 per single room occupied in Kathmandu.

Includes

- Escorting guide for 7 Days
- Sound Healing and Dinner at Avata
- 2 nights at Hotel in Kathmandu in BB Basis
- Nagarkot Community Homestay and Kirtipur Community Homestay on Full Board basis.
- Hatha Yoga Instructor at Nagarkot
- Tapari and Batti Making at Nagarkot
- Momo Cooking at Kirtipur
- Ranjana Lipi and Aila Experience in Kirtipur
- Mask Painting at Thimi
- All entrances to heritage sites

Excludes

- Meals other than mentioned in the itinerary
- Services other than mentioned in the itinerary
- Travel and medical insurance including evacuation and cancellation.
- Expenses of personal nature including bar bills, laundry, telephone calls.
- Tips and gratuities.
- Nepal visa fees
- Any item not specified as included.

- Expenses arising from unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of Community Homestay Network such as floods, landslides, road blockage, flight delays, flight cancellations etc.

Impact Footprint:

- [Women-Led Community Tourism](#)

Support and participate in women-led community tourism initiatives, such as community homestays and local experiences like momo-making classes. These initiatives empower women by providing them with leadership roles and opportunities to share their culture and skills, enriching the travel experience for visitors while promoting community empowerment.

- Economic Empowerment

Engage with local artisans in [Bungamati](#) and [Bhaktapur](#) through craft workshops that support economic empowerment and sustainably preserve traditional activities. By learning from and participating in these experiences, travellers contribute to the livelihoods of these artisans and help maintain cultural traditions.

- Cultural Preservation

Participate in experiences that sustain and promote cultural heritage, such as learning the [Ranjana Lipi script](#). Engaging in these activities not only educates travellers about local customs and histories but also ensures that these traditions continue to thrive.

- Sustainability

Encourage environmentally friendly crafts, such as [Tapari and Batti](#) making in Nagarkot, while promoting sustainable practices. By choosing to support eco-conscious artisans, travellers contribute to the conservation of natural resources and the promotion of sustainable livelihoods.

- Local Economic Support

Explore off-the-beaten-path destinations and participate in initiatives developed and led by local communities. This approach supports community-led tourism and helps distribute the economic benefits of tourism more equitably, fostering resilience in less-visited areas.

FAQs

What kind of accommodation should I expect on this trip?

This itinerary offers a mix of comfortable heritage-style hotels in the city and community homestays in rural areas. Hotels like Traditional Comfort are well-equipped, centrally located, and certified for sustainable practices. Homestays, on the other hand, offer clean and simple living conditions, with the charm of staying with a local family and experiencing authentic Nepali hospitality.

Are the toilets Western-style or squat-style?

Most of the accommodations, including homestays, now have Western-style toilets. However, in homestays, toilets are often located outside the room, though still within the home and kept clean. You'll be briefed on specific arrangements at each stop.

How are hygiene and cleanliness maintained in homestays?

While homestays are modest, they are kept very clean, with attention to hygiene in both living spaces and kitchens. Meals are home-cooked with fresh ingredients, and hosts take pride in offering safe and nourishing food.

What if I prefer to stay in a hotel instead of a homestay?

We understand that preferences vary. In each destination where a homestay is planned, there's the option to request a hotel stay instead. Please let us know your preference in advance so we can make arrangements accordingly.

What should I know before joining workshops and local experiences like cooking, crafts, or yoga?

All activities are designed to be interactive, beginner-friendly, and culturally immersive. Whether it's painting a mask, cooking momos, or joining a yoga session, you'll be guided by locals who love sharing their skills. No prior experience is needed—just an open mind!

Is there a lot of hiking or physical activity involved?

There are a few light to moderate hikes included, such as the walk from Nala to Nagarkot and the visit to Jalpa Devi Temple. These are paced gently and can be tailored for comfort. Good walking shoes and a basic level of fitness are recommended.

Are meals included? What kind of food can I expect?

Yes, most meals are included and feature traditional Nepali dishes. During your stay in homestays, you'll enjoy home-cooked meals, and in some city-based programs, meals are served at selected restaurants. Dietary preferences can usually be accommodated with prior notice.

How do I communicate with homestay hosts? Do they speak English?

Basic English is spoken by most host families, especially the younger members. For deeper interactions, your local guide or community coordinator will help bridge any language gaps.

Will there be Wi-Fi at all accommodations?

Most hotels provide reliable Wi-Fi. In homestays, internet access may be limited or slower, offering you a chance to unplug and connect more deeply with the community and nature.

Is it safe to travel in these rural areas?

Yes, the areas you'll be visiting are safe and frequently visited by both domestic and international travelers. The communities are welcoming, and your hosts and guides will always prioritize your comfort and safety.

Can I buy souvenirs during the trip?

Absolutely. You'll have opportunities to purchase locally made crafts, including wood carvings in Bungamati, painted masks in Thimi, and handmade items from the communities you visit. Buying directly supports local artisans and communities.

Additional Information:

Accommodation

Throughout the trip, we prioritize accommodations that align with our commitment to sustainable and community-based tourism. While some destinations offer deluxe hotels and lodges, the core of this journey focuses on immersive, locally-run stays, particularly homestays and boutique lodges that engage in sustainable practices.

In Kathmandu, you'll stay at [Traditional Comfort](#), offering a comfortable and convenient base for city exploration. These properties reflect Nepalese heritage while providing modern amenities such as quality bedding and Wi-Fi. They are well-located in the heart of Kathmandu, giving you easy access to local landmarks and ensuring a reliable and restful stay.

In Bungamati, you'll experience a [homestay](#) run by local families, where you'll be immersed in the Newari culture. The accommodations are simple yet clean, offering comfortable rooms with basic furnishings. While the bathrooms are often outside the rooms, you'll enjoy a truly authentic experience, learning about woodcarving traditions and connecting with local artisans. This homestay offers a unique and immersive cultural experience in a traditional Newari town.

In Nagarkot, you will stay in a [Nagarkot Community Homestay](#). This peaceful retreat offers a connection to nature, with rooms that are cozy and clean, complemented by home-cooked meals prepared by the host family. Many of the homes feature small backyard gardens, adding a fresh and personal touch to your stay. While the bathrooms may be separate from the rooms, the accommodations provide a welcoming and authentic environment for relaxation after a day of hiking.

The [Namobuddha Resort](#) provides a more luxurious experience, offering beautiful scenic views of the Himalayas and a tranquil atmosphere. The resort offers well-maintained, comfortable rooms and a serene environment, ideal for unwinding and reflecting on your trip. It's a perfect blend of comfort and spiritual connection, located near the famous Namobuddha Monastery.

Meals

While staying at hotels in Nepal, guests can expect a wide variety of meals ranging from traditional Nepali dishes to popular international cuisines such as Indian, Chinese, and Continental. Most hotels offer buffet breakfasts and à la carte options for lunch and dinner, prepared by professional chefs with a focus on comfort and flavour. Depending upon the lunch place of the day, especially while you are on an excursion, the guide may suggest you some delicacies. The quality of meals prepared may not be of the quality like you may find in big cities of Nepal but they will be delicious and hygienically prepared.

At community homestays, meals are a warm and authentic part of the cultural experience. Guests are served freshly prepared home-cooked meals made with locally sourced ingredients. Typical dishes include dal bhat (lentils and rice), seasonal vegetables, pickles, and sometimes local specialities of the destination. Meals are often shared with the host family, offering a deeper connection to local customs and everyday life.

Local Currency

For travellers touring Nepal, it's advisable to carry an average of USD 40–60 per day for a mid-range experience, covering meals for the days you are sightseeing or while at the hotel and some shopping. Nepal is mostly cash-based outside major cities, so carry sufficient Nepali Rupees (NPR) for rural areas, though ATMs are available in cities like Kathmandu, Pokhara, and major tourist hubs.

Transportation

In order to meet safety standards, we ensure that the vehicles used during the tours are of high quality and in excellent condition. All safety requirements such as seat belts and fire extinguishers are provided in every vehicle. Our **road captains** are highly trained to handle various road conditions, ensuring that your journey is both safe and smooth. Additionally, all vehicles are **regularly maintained** to ensure reliability and comfort throughout your trip.

Guide and Support Staff

The accompanying tour guides and trekking guides are all well trained and well educated. They all have gained their profession license from Government of Nepal to do tour and trekking guiding in Nepal. In addition to their professional license, they are trained to provide magical, unique and unforgettable experiences during their sightseeing tours in historical sites or while trekking. While on trek, our guides go the extra mile to make sure that your foods are being prepared hygienically. Like our road captains, First Aid Training is provided to all our guides. Our guides will not be handing you medicines in case of need but they are trained to provide you with all the assistance you may require in case of emergency until you receive professional medical help.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for entry into Nepal. However, you should consult your doctor for up-to-date information regarding vaccinations, high altitude medication and medications for any reasonably foreseeable illnesses whilst traveling in Nepal. We strongly recommend you to carry a small medication pack that you may need throughout the trip. Please discuss this carefully with your doctor.

Money Exchange

As currency exchange rates in Asia fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: www.xe.com. There are many ATM machines that accept both Visa and MasterCard but these are limited to major cities. Major credit cards are accepted in most shops but they may charge a 2-4% transaction fee.

Tipping Guidelines

Tipping is a meaningful gesture of appreciation and widely practiced in Nepal. While it is not mandatory, it is expected in exchange for exceptional service.

- Guides: USD 7–10 per day per traveler
- Drivers: USD 4–7 per day

- Porters (if included): USD 4–7 per day
- Homestay hosts or workshop leaders: Group tips of USD 10–15 per host/activity

Visas

Please note it is your responsibility to arrange visas before you travel. Below are the visa requirements at the time of printing. NEPAL: All foreign nationals (except Indians) require a visa to enter Nepal. Visas are obtainable from embassies abroad or on arrival at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan airport. If getting the visa at the airport, be prepared for long queues. You will also need to provide one passport photo and the following fees in US dollars' cash only: single entry visa valid for 15 days - US \$30; Single Entry Visa for 30 days - US \$50 and multiple entry visa valid for 90 days - US \$125.

Please kindly find the link to the on-arrival visa application [here](#). Please print it out and bring it along to submit to the immigration desk along with the exact amount in USD for the visa fee.

Packing List:

Please kindly find the link below to find the packing list:

<https://travelnepal.com/travel-advice/nepal-packing-list/>

Weather:

Nepal has a generally temperate climate, but varying altitudes lead to distinct variations. The monsoon sweeps up from India each summer, making mid-June to mid-September humid and wet.

Winter (December-February) winter is cold and you will need to be prepared, but the air is very clear providing the best mountain views.

Spring (March-May) Days are increasingly warm; mist and clouds are not uncommon.

Summer (June-August) The monsoon season. It will rain every day, although not all day.

Autumn (September - November) is the most pleasant season, in which days are warm but not hot and skies are clear.

Please note that the weather information is for reference only. Weather cannot be forecasted.



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