



Earthbound Expeditions

Panchase Hill Trek

8 days, from US\$725 per person

Duration

8 days

Grade

Easy

Max altitude

2,517 m

Start and end

Kathmandu

On the trail

3 to 5 hours a day

Best season

Oct to Apr

Accommodation

Teahouses and homestays

Meals

All meals on the trek

Group size

Up to 12

Getting there

Fly to Pokhara

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Panchase Hill Trek Overview

Four easy days in a protected forest above Pokhara, ending at dawn on a sacred summit with views from Dhaulagiri to Manaslu on one side and Phewa Lake on the other, and very few other trekkers.

Trek overview

This eight-day trip includes four days of walking in the wooded hills on the south-west side of the Pokhara valley. You start on the ridge at Naudanda, cross farmland to Bhadaure, climb through oak and rhododendron forest to the saddle at Panchase Bhanjyang, and walk up in the dark to the summit at 2,517 m. You then descend the other side to Phewa Lake and cross it by boat.

Who this trip is for

Anyone who can walk for four to six hours on a hill path and is comfortable with simple accommodation. There is no altitude problem, no pass, no snow in the walking seasons and nothing technical. It suits families, travellers with one week rather than two, and anyone who has walked a busy trail and would prefer a quieter one.

Panchase compared with Poon Hill

The mountains are forty kilometres away rather than directly above you, so if you want to be close to glaciers, this is not the right trek. Instead, you walk through a forest with around 120 species of orchid and about 260 species of bird, visit a sacred summit that Nepali pilgrims climb but few foreign visitors know about, and spend whole days without meeting other trekkers. Ghorepani is no longer this quiet.

Permits

Sources disagree on this. Several detailed independent guides state that no permit is needed, because the hill is a Protected Forest managed by the Division Forest Office rather than part of the Annapurna Conservation Area, and there is no staffed ACAP counter on the Bhadaure approach. Other operators list the ACAP permit and a TIMS card as required. We buy the ACAP permit for every trekker in any case, and it is included in your price.

Itinerary

Day	Route	Hours	Distance	Altitude
1	Arrive Kathmandu	–	–	1,400 m
2	Fly to Pokhara, afternoon by the lake	–	–	830 m
3	Drive to Naudanda, walk to Bhadaure	3–4 hrs	8 km	1,670 m
4	Bhadaure to Panchase Bhanjyang	3–4 hrs	7 km	2,065 m
5	Panchase Hill at dawn, down to Bhumdi	6–7 hrs	14 km	2,517 m
6	Bhumdi, Peace Pagoda, boat across Phewa	3–4 hrs	10 km	830 m
7	Fly or drive to Kathmandu	–	–	1,400 m
8	Fly home	–	–	1,400 m

Day 1

Arrive in Kathmandu

We meet you at Kathmandu airport and drive you to your hotel. The rest of the day is free to rest after the flight or walk into the old city. In the evening we have dinner together and brief you on the week, the equipment you need and the weather in the hills above Pokhara.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, arrival day Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Dinner

Day 2

Fly to Pokhara

A twenty-five-minute flight west to Pokhara, with the Annapurna range visible from the right-hand windows on a clear morning. The afternoon is free beside Phewa Lake, where you will finish the walk on day six. We arrange the permits, introduce you to your guide, and you can see the ridge you will climb.

Altitude: 830 m On foot: None, flight day Night: Hotel, Pokhara Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 3

Drive to Naudanda and trek to Bhadaure

A forty-five-minute drive up the Baglung highway to Naudanda at 1,515 m, then onto a ridge of terraced fields and scattered farms. The walking is gentle, mostly on stone-paved paths between villages, and you finish at Bhadaure, a Gurung village with homestays and views of the Annapurnas to the north.

Altitude: 1,670 m On foot: 8 km, 3–4 hrs Night: Homestay, Bhadaure Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4

Trek through the forest to Panchase Bhanjyang

This is the best forest day of the trek. The trail leaves the farmland and climbs through oak and rhododendron forest with orchids, passing Sidhane, where the community runs the homestays and knows where to find birds. Panchase Bhanjyang lies in a saddle at 2,065 m, with about seven teahouses and no road.

Altitude: 2,065 m On foot: 7 km, 3–4 hrs Night: Teahouse, Panchase Bhanjyang Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5

Sunrise on Panchase Hill and trek to Bhumdi

We set off in the dark for the final 450 m to the summit at 2,517 m, where there is a small Shiva temple, a holy pond and a viewing tower. On a clear morning, Dhaulagiri, Annapurna, Machhapuchhre and Manaslu appear one by one. We return for breakfast and then make a long descent to Bhumdi.

Altitude: 2,517 m at the summit On foot: 14 km, 6–7 hrs Night: Lodge, Bhumdi Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6

Walk to the World Peace Pagoda and cross Phewa Lake by boat

A short morning walk through the forest along the ridge above Phewa Lake to the white World Peace Pagoda on its hilltop, then down through the trees to the water. A wooden boat takes you across to Lakeside. The afternoon and evening are free.

Altitude: 830 m On foot: 10 km, 3–4 hrs Night: Hotel, Pokhara Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 7

Return to Kathmandu

A morning flight back to Kathmandu, or a six-hour drive if you would like to see the Trisuli river. The afternoon is free for Thamel, Patan or rest, and in the evening we have dinner together with the guide. If your onward flight allows, stay an extra night to visit Bhaktapur.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, flight day Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 8

Departure

We drive you to the airport for your flight home. Nothing on this trip depends on mountain weather or a mountain airstrip, so unlike on our Everest itineraries, you do not need a spare day at the end. If you have one, Nagarkot or Bhaktapur are good options.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, departure day Night: No overnight Meals: Breakfast

What's included

- Airport transfers and ground transport
- Licensed English-speaking guide
- Accommodation throughout the trip
- All permits and conservation area fees
- Meals as per the itinerary

Not included

- International flights
- Travel and rescue insurance
- Personal trekking gear
- Tips and personal expenses
- Nepal entry visa (on arrival)

Packing list

Pack light, as you will probably carry your own bag

Most people walk this trek with a daypack and no porter, which works well: the days are short, the climbs are modest and 7 kg is a comfortable load. If you prefer not to carry anything, we can arrange a porter for \$18 to \$24 a day, with a 20 kg limit shared between two trekkers. We provide the duffel and the sleeping bag, and anything you leave behind is stored free of charge at your Pokhara hotel.

Headwear and eyewear

- Sun hat with a brim. The ridge is exposed and the sun is strong from March
- A warm hat for the early start on day 5, from October to March
- Sunglasses, category 2 or 3
- Head torch and spare batteries. The summit climb starts before five
- Sun cream, SPF 30 or higher, and lip balm

Clothing

- Two or three base layers, merino or synthetic, not cotton
- One fleece, and a light insulated jacket for dawn on the summit
- A waterproof jacket. Even in the dry season, there are showers on this green hill
- Two pairs of long trekking trousers, for protection from leeches and nettles

- Underwear and socks for four days

Footwear and hands

- Trekking boots or sturdy trail shoes with good grip. The stone steps are polished and slippery
- Four pairs of walking socks
- Light gloves, for the winter months only
- Camp shoes or sandals for the evenings
- Leech socks if you are travelling close to the monsoon, available cheaply in Pokhara

Bags

- A 30 to 35 litre daypack. Most people carry their own bag on this trek
- A duffel if you would like a porter. We provide one
- A rain cover and a dry bag for electronics

Sleeping

- Sleeping bag rated to 0°C. We provide one, and from March to May you may not need it
- A silk or cotton liner, for hygiene rather than warmth
- Earplugs. Village houses have thin walls, and there are roosters

Health

- Blister plasters, tape, painkillers and rehydration salts
- Insect repellent with DEET, which also deters leeches
- A small tub of salt if you are walking during or near the monsoon
- Water purification as a backup to the boiled water at the lodges
- Hand sanitiser and wet wipes

Documents and money

- Passport valid for six months, plus a photocopy
- Two passport photographs for the permit
- Travel insurance certificate covering trekking to 3,000 m
- \$100 to \$150 in small notes, changed into rupees in Pokhara. No village on the hill accepts cards

Useful extras

- Binoculars. With 260 bird species on this hill, they are the most useful item you can bring
- A macro lens, or a phone with one, for the orchids from March to June
- Trekking poles, mainly for the descent on day 5
- A book. The evenings are long and there is no wifi

Route map

Panchase Hill Trek

8 days | Highest point 2,517 m | Easy



Start: Fly to Pokhara End: Back to Kathmandu

Altitude by day



Optional extras

Paragliding over Pokhara

\$95, 1 morning

A thirty-minute flight from Sarangkot with views of the Annapurnas across the valley. The afternoon of day 6 is free and this is a popular way to spend it.

Sarangkot sunrise

\$35, 1 morning

An early drive up the opposite ridge for the classic view over Pokhara. It offers a different angle with less walking, and a second chance if day 5 was cloudy.

Two more nights in Pokhara

\$110, +2 days

Two extra nights at Lakeside at the end of the trek, with boats, bookshops and swimming in the lake. This is a very popular addition.

Birdwatching day with a specialist

\$140, +1 day

An extra night at Panchase Bhanjyang with a naturalist guide who knows the bird calls, to look for sunbirds, laughingthrushes and possibly the spiny babbler, Nepal's only endemic bird.

Chitwan jungle safari

from \$390, +3 days

A visit to the lowlands to see rhinos and crocodiles, easily added between Pokhara and Kathmandu on the return journey.

Ghandruk, three more days

from \$290, +3 days

Continue north to the large Gurung village of Ghandruk, much closer to Annapurna South. This is a natural extension if one week feels too short.

Single room

\$90

A room to yourself for the four hotel nights. On the hill, the houses offer twin-share rooms only.

Photos, videos and reviews of this trip: enepaltrekking.com/panchase-trek