11 DAYS

LUXURY TREK TO RARA LAKE

Starting Jumla & Ending Point Rara Lake

GURKHA ENCOUNTERS
LUXURY ADVENTURE TRAVEL
Rara Lake

This interesting and varied trek takes you to the western region of Nepal and ultimately to the largest lake in the country. We travel through less frequented regions, with traditional villages and scenic passes in complete wilderness. Rara Lake (5.1km long and 2.7km wide), sometimes referred to as Mahendra Taal, is located in Mugu District and sits at an altitude of 2,990m. It is situated in Rara National Park, and there is the chance to explore the lake area on the rest day during the 8 day trek. The park is home to 214 species of birds, and migratory birds, and dozens of mammal species, including the Himalayan black bear, musk deer, red panda, jackals and others. The trek is quite strenuous in parts but does not rise above approximately 3,500m. The trail we take passes through lush vegetation and interesting villages, along rivers and over panoramic passes. Being a remote and less touristy area of the country, this is a camping trek where you can enjoy evenings under the stars before retiring to your luxury tent for a good nights sleep.
Day 01: ARRIVE IN KATHMANDU (1,300M)

On arrival at Kathmandu Tribhuvan International Airport, you will be greeted by our staff, who will escort you to the hotel. After some refreshments our Sherpa guide or other representative will give you a brief orientation about the hotel, Kathmandu itself, trekking, and the do's and don'ts of the area. They will also review any additional information that you might require while in Nepal, including an overview of the next day's sightseeing tour. In the evening, you will enjoy a complimentary welcome dinner at one of the finest traditional Nepalese restaurants in Kathmandu. Transfers by private vehicle.

Overnight: Hotel Hyatt Regency

Day 02: FULL-DAY SIGHTSEEING IN KATHMANDU

After breakfast, proceed to Kathmandu Durbar Square. Here we take in the ancient palace, the temple of the Kumari, known as the living goddess, Hanuman Dhoka, and Kathamandap Temple. From our knowledgeable guide, you will learn about Nepalese history, architecture and religion.

From here, proceed by private vehicle to the Buddhist site of Swoyambhunath Stupa, also known as the "Monkey Temple" because of its lively troops of resident monkeys. From Swoyambhunath you can look down over the city while learning about the local Buddhist culture. Then visit Pashupatinath Temple, the holiest shrine for Hindus, situated on the banks of the Bagmati River. Being that the Bagmati is considered a holy river, many funeral cremations take place along its banks.

Before returning to the hotel, visit Boudhnath Stupa, a Buddhist pilgrimage center and home to many colorful gompas, or monasteries. The area is particularly vibrant and colourful in the early evening when locals come out to circumambulate around the stupa, reciting prayers as they walk. Once back at the hotel, you will receive a briefing about the trek and have a chance to meet your guides and ask any last minute questions before the next morning’s departure.

Overnight: Hotel Hyatt Regency

Day 03: FLY FROM KATHMANDU TO JUMLA (2,500M) 1.5 HRS

After breakfast drive to the airport around 6am by private vehicle from where you will have a scenic flight by the latest model private chartered B3E helicopter. We fly over the Himalayan foothills, with views of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri peaks to the north. Note: the helicopter may stop for about 15 minutes in Pokhara Airport and 15 minutes in Nepalgunj Airport for re-fueling purposes. On arrival at Jumla our trekking staff will receive you.

Jumla is the largest town in the hills of the Karnali District. This area is Nepal's most sparsely-populated administrative zone with few roads and is mainly accessible on foot or by air. There is time to explore Jumla to see the bazaar and temple dedicated to Chandan Nath, a mythical saint who defeated a serpent’s demon, and emptied the lake which flooded the valley.

Overnight: Luxury Camping Jumla

Day 04: TREK TO CHERE CHAUR (3,000M) 5 HRS

After breakfast take half an hour walk from Jumla towards the college to the small village called Micha where, in a small walled enclosure, stands a number of stone stupas explaining some of Buddha's history. The stupas were erected in memory of important dignitaries of the region and date back to the late 15th century. From here we climb away from Jumla and follow the trail to our overnight camp at Chere Chaurs.

Overnight: Luxury Camping Chere Chaur
Day 05: TREK TO CHALACHAUR (2,980M)

After breakfast we take a route heading west, climbing through birch and pine forests to the unnamed grassy pass sometimes known as Jaljala. As the walk progresses, views of Kanjiroba Himal can be seen to the East, with its twin peaks that towers over the adjacent area. In the afternoon, descend about 870m through beautiful forests to our campsite.

Overnight: Luxury Camping Chala Chaur

Day 06: TREK TO SINJA VALLEY (2,490M)

Climbing uphill to Sinja Valley, we pass through several villages and follow the Jaljala River through forests with immense gnarled pines, and through terraced farmland. Just before the final descent to Sinja the trail passes the 300 year old Kanaksundari Temple where ancient stone lions guard the inner sanctum. Sinja was once the ancient and thriving winter capital of the Malla kings and a few Malla stones dating from the medieval Khasa Kingdom can still be seen alongside the trail. The trail passes south of the peaked, white temple and descends to the main river, crossing a thick plant bridge at a place where the water has cut a deep, narrow furrow through bedrock. Sinja village rests upon a small alluvial plain on the west bank of the clear Lah Gad River, although here it is called Sinja River. The ruined town actually stood on the east bank of the Sinja River, at a place known as Kotgaon or Lamathada, where you can explore the ancient sculptured stones overgrown with weeds.

Overnight: Luxury Camping Sinja Valley

Day 07: TREK TO GHIROSINGHA (3,050M)

After breakfast we leave the Sinja Valley, passing through farmland, until we reach the entrance of Rara National Park at the Ghorosingha check-post.

Overnight: Luxury Camping Ghorosingha
Day 08: TREK TO RARA LAKE (3,000M)

Leaving the Ghorosingha campsite, our route leads to a climb all the way to the Chuchemara Danda ridge, at around an elevation of 4,260m. This part takes nearly 2 hours, but the climb is not too hard. From the crest of the ridge, an excellent panorama can be seen against the northern horizon. Descending the trail northwards, Rara Lake will soon be seen to the north-east and the trail passes through bamboo and birch forests before crossing the Khatyar River which is followed upstream to our overnight camp near the shores of Rara Lake.

Overnight: Luxury Camping Rara Lake

Day 09: EXPLORE RARA LAKE

Rara Lake is the biggest freshwater lake in Nepal. After breakfast you can walk to Murma Hill for the full view of Rara Lake and surrounding valleys or climb the wooden observation tower. There is also the opportunity for boating and admiring the picturesque setting of the lake, as well as visiting the National Park Headquarters to pick up information about the Park itself. Swimming is allowed, and it is very cold and refreshing!

Overnight: Luxury Camping Rara Lake

Day 10: FLY RARA LAKE TO KATHMANDU

After a champagne breakfast fly by the latest model B3E helicopter from Rara Lake to Kathmandu. Upon landing in Kathmandu our staff will receive you and escort you to the hotel. In the afternoon relax at the hotel and enjoy the spa or take a short, 10 minutes walk, to the area around Boudhanath Stupa to do some shopping. In the evening enjoy a farewell dinner in a typical Nepali restaurant with a culture show.

Overnight: Hotel Hyatt Regency

Day 11: DEPARTURE

Today our staff will take you to the airport for your international flight. Please advise us in advance of your flight time and please ensure your ticket is confirmed. We can do this for you.

Note: If you have more time you can join one of our luxury tours:

- 9 day luxury tour to India
- 7 day luxury tour to Bhutan
- 6 day luxury tour to Tibet (Lhasa).
Our Special Highlights

Each of our programmes has extra special services that make us different from other tour agencies:

- We use the latest model B3E helicopter for the Kathmandu – Jumla and Rara Lake – Kathmandu flights.
- We provide luxury suites in the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Kathmandu.
- Unlike other trekking agencies, we do not provide dome tents. We provide luxury tents, with enough headroom to stand up in, and which are fitted with beds.
- We provide dry foods like almonds, peanuts and chocolate bars where necessary during the trek.
- We take fresh seasonal fruits for your evening dessert.
- We provide unlimited tea/ coffee on the trek.
- Our guides are highly experienced, educated, dedicated and able to take decisions in any unforeseen difficult situation.

Services Included

- 3 nights luxury suite accommodation in the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Kathmandu with AP meal plan (3 meals per day).
- 7 nights luxury tented accommodation with beds in private tents in Jumla and Rara Region with AP meal plan.
- Champagne with breakfast at Rara Lake.
- Pure mineral water for drinking.
- Hot boiled water for washing.
- License holder, experienced, English speaking guide (we also have other language speaking guides, please ask us) for the entire tour.
- High altitude porters for the entire trek.
- Kitchen staff with our best trekking cook.
- Member tents, kitchen tents, dining tents, toilet tents, bathroom tents.

Services Exclude

- Emergency rescue evacuation charges.
- Medical charges.
- Extra beverage and bar bill during the trek.
- Personal travel insurance fees.
- Extra charges borne by any natural calamities or political strikes.
- Tips for the guides, porters and drivers.

Our Special Highlights

To confirm your trip we request an advance payment of 40% of the quoted amount. This can be done by credit card when filling up our GE Booking Form.

If you pay by cheque/ bank draft please make it payable to:

Gurkha Encounters Pvt. Ltd.
GPO Box: 20195, Third Floor, Bhattachan Complex, Baluwatar, Kathmandu 44600, Nepal
Phone: +977 1 4417959
info@gurkhaencounters.com
www.gurkhaencounters.com

Note: Payment through Master/Visa card has an additional bank service charge of 4%. Payment through American Express has an additional bank service charge of 5.5%.

Terms & Conditions

- The Company is not liable for any refunds after the departure date of the scheduled itinerary.
- Cancellation should be made not less than 48 hours before departure. There is a minimum 40% cancellation charge PLUS any tax, transportation and permit fees. See specific information below.
- No refund will be given if the programme ends before the stated itinerary date.
- The Company is not to be held responsible for the early termination of a trek should our experienced leader feel it is unsafe for you.
The Company is not liable for cancellation or rescheduling due to natural, political or bureaucratic circumstances.

The Company is not responsible for delays caused by local weather conditions resulting in local or international flights being missed. We suggest you leave adequate time between the end of your trek and your international flight.

The Company is not responsible for the financial implications of rescue, should it be necessary. Please ensure you have the appropriate insurance to cover these situations before you arrive in Nepal.

Our staff are very experienced in leading treks at all altitudes. It is their responsibility to ensure your safety. Therefore, their decision regarding safety is final. The Company is not responsible in any way, for any outcome, should you refuse to follow their advice.

Cancellation Charge Incurred

If you cancel your trip for any reason the following scale of cancellation fees will apply:

- 60 days before departure
  Loss of deposit - 40% of total trip cost
- 29 days to 59 days before departure
  Loss of deposit - 50% of total trip cost
- 10 to 28 days before departure
  Loss of deposit - 70% of total trip cost
- Less than 10 days before departure
  Loss of deposit - 100% of total trip cost

GENERAL INFORMATION

Equipment List (general, recommended items, may vary depending on your trek)
A pair of light hiking boots (please wear them before arrival to ensure comfort)
A pair of sandals

2 pairs of woolen socks and 2 pair of hiking socks
1 medium poly pro shirt
1 pile jacket
1 down jacket
1 woolen hat
2 T-shirts
1 long sleeve tshirt or shirt
Two pairs of loose trekking pants
A pair of sunglasses
A pair of glove shells with liner or ski gloves (optional)
A pair of woolen gloves
One trekking back pack of 7 or 8 litre capacity
A pair of trekking poles
1 four seasons sleeping bag (we also provide a four seasons sleeping bag for your convenience)
Sunscreen lotion with a high SPF
Sunscreen stick with a high SPF
Two books for reading (optional)
ipod or similar, camera and necessary chargers (optional)
A one litre water bottle
One flash light with 4 sets of batteries

Toiletry Items

Please bring with you a towel, pre-moistened novelettes, wash cloth, lip balm, and any additional personal items. Please ensure you bring enough personal medicines and extras incase of flight delays.

Miscellaneous Items

Photo equipment with spare batteries
Reading/writing material
Safety pins, sewing kits, zip lock bags for small items
You may wish to bring postcards of your hometown and/or photos of home and family to share with locals you meet along the route. Please do not give money or sweets to children on the trails.
Welcome to the Himalaya Namaste! Welcome to the Himalayan country of Nepal!

We are proud and excited to show you our home. Nepal is also home to many of the highest mountains in the world, including the highest itself, Mount Everest. By contrast we also have some of the deepest gorges, lush valleys, great rivers, colourful peoples, ancient monuments and a long interesting history. Our scenery is stunning, our culture is both serene and spiritual, and vibrant and alive. Visitors can trek the hills, climb the snow-capped mountains, raft our whitewater rivers, take animal safaris in the lush jungles of the lowlands, discover exotic nooks and crannies in our ancient towns, discover both Hinduism and Buddhism through colourful living festivals or ancient World Heritage sites, witness prayer flags fluttering against blue skies, and overall enjoy the warmth of the Nepali peoples.

Gurkha Encounters is a leading trekking, adventure and eco travel company, established in 1988 and based in Kathmandu. We specialize in the Himalayan regions of Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan and India, including Sikkim. Our services include advice, planning and organisation of a wide range of adventure and trekking travel options and related services. We can help you plan your trek or climbing expeditions; jungle safari; whitewater rafting; mountain biking tours; sightseeing; special interest holiday or a romantic break. We specialize in tours tailored for the individual, small groups or families, and in educational expeditions for schools and youth groups, and corporate services.

Our office staff, guides and support staff are all local to the towns and villages we pass through on our tours. All are experienced, registered, and qualified. Our extensive local knowledge as well as our experience and local contacts mean that we are able to provide the best service to our clients. We are proud of our reputation for quality, innovation and overall customer service with a focus on cultural and environmentally responsible travel. We aim to provide you with a friendly and personal service to a very high standard, at competitive and fair prices. We ensure you a truly memorable adventure!
Small Group Travel

Most of our trips, treks and tours are organised on a small group basis, usually with a maximum of 16 persons. On family holidays the maximum number is 20 to allow a number of families to join. By keeping numbers small we are able to offer a friendly, personal and high quality service. Should you wish to travel only with your friends or family, please ask us and we can tailor a trip to suit your needs.

Tailor Made Private Charter Adventures
We offer a very competitive complete tailor made service and are happy to design private charter programmes for individuals and groups as well as to tailor any of our packages to more closely meet your requirements. We have a wealth of experience in helping our past clients in designing and planning individual adventures, ranging from romantic breaks to personal challenges, fundraising programmes, and student programmes, to extreme adventure expeditions. We can provide trips for low budgets to 'no expense spared' budgets. We'll work closely with you to design your adventure. Our advertised brochure prices will give you an idea of what you can expect to pay but we'll provide individual quotes based upon your itinerary, requirements, budget and number of people traveling. Naturally we will take care of the research and arrangements for your flights, accommodation, guides, transport, permits, peak fees, equipment requirements, food and ground handling service for your trek or tour. In short, we will do the work while you enjoy yourself, stress free.

Group and Club Organisers
If you are organising a trip for a group or a club we will offer one free* additional place for every 10 bookings made. You can use this for your own travel, use it to reduce the overall cost of the trip for everyone, or perhaps offer it as a fantastic prize for your group members or for a charity. Contact us for more details and for conditions (* permit fees, national park entry fees, airfares and departure taxes not included).

Contact Us
We are always happy to provide more information and suggestions. If you are in Kathmandu, please visit our office:
Gurkha Encounters Pvt. Ltd.
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For general information please visit our website www.gurkhaencounters.com

Trekking in the Himalaya – Basic Information

The Himalaya mountain region provide some of the finest trekking routes available. And within the Himalaya, Nepal's mountainous, hilly and lowland Terai regions offer some of the most spectacular trekking in the world. Varying from high altitude routes, some of which visit base camps used by mountaineering expeditions, to easy short treks within the Kathmandu Valley and lower hill country, Nepal has the best. Travel through picturesque villages, subtropical lowlands, vast meadows and forests, cross fast flowing rivers, deep canyons and visit the cold and barren regions at the foot of the great mountain peaks. The views change with the seasons, with the different planting and harvesting cycles, and with the brilliant display of wild flowers in spring and autumn. But whichever season you come, you can be assured of stunning scenery and a trip to remember.

Trekking with us means an adventure walking holiday, with a small group of other trekkers, led by an experienced and professional English speaking local guide. We use professionally trained and experienced local Sherpa guides or Sirdars on our treks, tours and expeditions, and are totally confident in their ability and
experience. Local guides are integral to providing you with the best travel experience. Not only can they share local knowledge and insights, but as you travel you are contributing to the local economy and supporting local communities. Whatever route you choose, you’ll be sure to meet local people and enjoy stunning landscapes as you walk, at your own pace, through well established village trails. Whilst some of the popular trekking trails are used by climbing expeditions on their approach marches, most have been used for hundreds of years by local communities for everyday travel and trade. Thus, the paths in Nepal are still working and living trails, not man-made only for tourists. Experience the original!

**Teahouse Trekking**

On the more popular treks in Nepal, particularly in the Everest, Langtang and Annapurna Regions, enterprising villagers have built teahouse lodges, similar to European style alpine lodges, offering simple but comfortable accommodation and food. We have researched and offer a selection of single/twin sharing rooms in the best available lodges run to a high level of service. We also supply a four season sleeping bag and cotton liner free of charge on our teahouse treks. Hire of other items can be arranged in advance, if needed. During the trek you’ll have three meals a day; a mixture of European and Asian style dishes of large portions. Soft drinks, sweets, mineral water and alcohol are not included in the price of our teahouse treks. Note: a few of our teahouse treks involve crossing high passes and necessitate camping for a couple of nights. We provide full camping services for these nights including four season sleeping bags.

**Fully Provisioned Camping Style Trekking**

This type of trek is staffed by a full Sherpa crew including a Sirdar (head man), cook and assistants. Porters, yaks, horses or mules will carry your main baggage. It is the Sherpa crew’s job to perform all the camp work, from setting up to providing freshly made meals, to leaving the site clean on departure. We provide twin share dome or frame sleeping tents, a kitchen tent, mess tent and toilet tent. We also provide tables, chairs or stools, lanterns/candles, thin sleeping mattresses, and all the crockery and cutlery required, as well as a fully equipped kitchen set up. The Sherpa crew will cook, wash up, and provide you with tea and coffee at night and for your wake up call in the morning. They will also provide you with hot water for washing. Food is a freshly prepared mix of Asian and Western dishes, with lots of choice. Three meals a day are provided. Soft drinks, sweets, mineral water and alcohol are not included.

**Our Grading System**

In Nepal, the trails often zigzag with plenty of ascents and descents and it is better to think in terms of hours spent walking rather than miles covered. A typical day’s walking is from five to seven hours. This includes a one hour lunch stop, and a comfortable pace of walking with time to enjoy your surroundings and take photographs.

We grade our treks using five grades which will help you get a general sense of what to expect and help you choose which is right for you. Factors such as weather conditions, altitude, fitness level, experience, interest, and how you feel on a particular day, all contribute to how easy or strenuous you will find a trip. If you’re unsure of whether a trek is suitable for you, just contact us before making your booking.

**We will ensure you have memorable time with us!**