

Gane & Marshall

TAILOR-MADE DESTINATIONS

Nepal in Comfort – Annapurna Base Camp *Phil and Patti's Trip Report*



Phil and Patti travelled to Annapurna Base Camp with us in Oct 2014 and were kind enough to provide a wonderful account of their trip, which we've reprinted in full below. The itinerary they followed was one of our new [Nepal in Comfort](#) programmes, and involved staying in luxury heated lodges and traditional Nepali tea houses, rather than tents. Read on to learn more:

We had been considering a trek to Annapurna Base Camp for a couple of years and when we saw that Gane & Marshall were now offering this trek we decided immediately to do it as we had been on some wonderful trips with Gane & Marshall before. We knew that Gane & Marshall would use the best in-country company and for Nepal we were placed in the excellent hands of Ker & Downey.

We loved everything about Nepal including all the hotels, Kathmandu and Pokhara. But the real highlight was the trek to Annapurna Base Camp itself. Nepal is a stunningly beautiful country with wonderful, friendly people. The trek was really challenging with steep uphill and downhill sections each day. We started walking in temperatures in excess of 30c passing through heavily wooded areas, open countryside with villages perched on hillsides, tropical bamboo forest and high alpine meadows eventually walking through 1 metre of snow to reach Base Camp. Even then we were walking in t-shirts and microfleece although the temperature did drop to -13c that night!

The trek itself was paced just right for us. We typically started walking about 8.30am after a hearty breakfast, stopping for tea at about 10.30am and then lunch at about 12.30 before reaching our destination for that day at about 1600hrs. We calculated that we walked about 80 miles, averaging 7 miles a day, although they ranged from 4 to 12 miles. There were some heart stopping moments, especially when you are halfway to your destination and see a sign that says 4300 steps still to go and then find that many of the bridges are not much more than a few tree trunks strung across a mountain gorge requiring high wire balancing skills! But we loved every minute of it.

We stayed in Ker & Downey lodges for the first 2 nights and the last night and these were wonderful and to a very high standard. For the remaining time we stayed at tea houses. Although the standard varies a bit with these they all exceeded our expectations. They were spotlessly clean and provided excellent, if basic food. We met lots of other trekkers at the tea houses and spent many an entertaining evening with them. When we reached ABC itself it was covered in snow which made for wonderful views (although of course it was the same snow that caused the disaster the other side of the mountain). We would thoroughly recommend this particular trek to anyone going to Nepal. We would particularly like to thank our fantastic team (Ruk the guide and Tika and Lama the porters) who helped make this such a memorable trip.

Beyond the trek itself we had some short time in Pokhara and Kathmandu staying at Temple Tree and Gokarna Forest hotels respectively. Both hotels were excellent and would easily stand comparison with UK 4* hotels. We only had half a day in Pokhara and in hindsight we wished we had spent a couple of days there as it looked to be a lovely, quiet town with good, safe places to go and things to do, including trips on the lake. We also had an afternoon and a morning in Kathmandu. We felt this was about right although we were unable to see all the sights in this time. Kathmandu centre is very busy and lively but we had a great time visiting Durbar Square and Thamel shopping district. The temples and palaces in Durbar Square were really worth the visit. The Boudanatha stupa was very close to our hotel (Gorkana Forest) and were able to visit this ourselves using hotel transport. We found Boudanatha to be a wonderful place, very relaxing even though crowded, and would recommend that it was on everyone's list of things to see.

Phil & Patti