

ADVENTUREX

WITHOUT ADVENTURE... WHAT IS LIFE?

The Sun Kosi

An Unbeatable River Expedition

This is the longest river trip offered in Nepal, carving through the beautiful Mahabharat Range on its meandering way from the 'put in' to the 'take out' at Chatra, far down on the Gangetic Plain. It's quite an experience to begin a river trip, barely 60 kms from the Tibetan border, and end the trip looking down the hot, dusty gun barrel of the North India Plain just 8 days later. The Sun Kosi starts off fairly relaxed, with class II and small class III rapids to warm up on during the first couple of days. But don't be fooled, this river reserves some of its biggest and best rapids for the last days. Meat Grinder, High Anxiety, Jaws, Harkapur 2, Roller Coaster, and the Big Dipper are only some of the rapids that have earned their names and reputations from previous expeditions. Days of constant whitewater, time spent exploring villages, jungle, and some of the small Hindu temples along the way, make this an unbeatable river expedition.

To run the Sun Kosi just after the Monsoon (early September) must rate as one of life's most exhilarating experiences. At this time of the year the river is high and wild, and definitely not for the faint-hearted. This is big volume whitewater at its best. Swept along by the pulsing waters, manoeuvring through boiling narrow channels and dodging obstacles, the river dances through corridors of lush forest then accelerates through leaping waves and roaring drops. There are dozens of adrenalin pumping rapids, but don't worry there are also miles of calmer water to relax, reflect on the beauty of this remote area and totally unwind!

Adventure Itinerary

Day 1:

Arrive in Kathmandu. You will be met by an AdventureX Guide and escorted to your hotel. Time to relax and change and then we'll head off to one of the many fine restaurants.
(No meals included)

Day 2:

Free time in Kathmandu to explore this amazing city. From observing early morning sessions of prayer wheel turning at the Buddhist Stupa of Bodhnath, to gaining a glimpse of the Living Goddess in Durbar Square, there are endless things to see. Or if you fancy a bit of retail therapy check out the multitude of shops selling branded fleeces and good quality merchandise – and be prepared to bargain! Finish the day with a relaxing cold drink in one of the many terrace cafes whilst the sun starts to go down on the distant snow-capped Himalayan Mountains. We'll meet up and have a pre-departure meeting and meal together.
(Breakfast included)

Days 3 - 9:

After a hearty breakfast we set off north towards the river. The put in for the Sun Kosi is only 2 hours away by bus through the ancient city of Baktapur and out of the Kathmandu valley to the village of Dolalghat. On a clear day the views of the Himalayas and Mt. Everest are incredible. At our put in point we sort equipment, inflate the rafts and have a safety talk. For the rafters - our river guides will take time explaining the finer points on how to paddle through whitewater and we have plenty of time to practice on the numerous smaller rapids we encounter on the first couple of days on the river. By the time we get to the really big rapids like Meat Grinder, High Anxiety and Harkapur the crews will be working together

perfectly and you're not going to believe what you see, hear, and feel. It is absolutely awesome! Your senses will be completely stimulated and you will feel on top of the world!

From Dolalghat we have 270km of blissful motor-free river before we hit the next road. 270 km of living with no other purpose than to see how much fun we can have. In no time at all your concerns from your life back home will seem distant, unimportant and forgotten. Hurrah!

Most of the rapids on the Sun Kosi are formed by monsoon debris brought in by side streams and loose rockfall. These rapids change from year to year depending on the severity of the monsoon rains. After stopping at Tokshel Harkapur and spending time checking out this porter town we drift down to a rapid called Harkapur 2. Pulling over to camp for the evening it is interesting to go down and look at the rapid and contemplate the start of the next day. Harkapur 2 is always an interesting rapid and there is plenty more to come. A few kms downstream we watch out for the famous Dudh Kosi, the river of milk, which tumbles down from Mount Everest. The Dudh Kosi is a lot cooler than the Sun Kosi. Below the suspension bridge is a small rapid that is followed by Jaws, then Dead Mans Eddy. Sculptured into the rock on the left side of the river is a huge eddy that has a dubious reputation of collecting most things that float downstream! The Jungle Corridor is an outrageous section of rapids in a hard rock canyon with tropical forest right down to the river. At the end of the Jungle Corridor a series of waterfalls cascade in from both banks so keep your soap and shampoo (biodegradable of course!) handy for a really refreshing shower.

Camping on the Sun Kosi is awesome. The massive floods of the monsoon deposit huge tracks of pure white sand along the river creating ideal campsites. We will have at least one layover day where we stay at the same river camp for two nights. HELLO BEACH PARTY!!! Volleyball, foot bag, Frisbee, sun bathing or just relaxing on a warm beach with a good book are favourite activities for the layover day. You can also take advantage of the layover day to trek to a peak or nearby village, or take part in the kayak workshop the safety boaters offer.

(Included: All meals Days 3-9)

Day 10:

The last big rapid of the trip is called the Big Dipper. It's then a quiet cruise down the confluence with the Tamur and Arun and the beginning of the Sapta Kosi, or the Seven Rivers. The confluence is called Tribeni Ghat and has an interesting temple to visit. Before emerging onto the flatland Terai, there is another larger Hindi Temple called Baraha Chetra. Every year on the day of the full moon in January, thousands of Hindu pilgrims mass here to pay homage to Lord Vishnu. Legend has it that once a demon god inhabited this area and troubled the villagers, holy men and pilgrims. Hearing of this, Lord Vishnu, preserver of the universe, took the form of a pig and slayed the demon in battle. Inside the temple is a pig headed figure of Lord Vishnu, and the annual Braha festival commemorates the victory. Just a little further downstream lays India and all its semi functional chaos.

By noon we have reached the takeout and all the expedition equipment is cleaned, sun-dried, and broken down then loaded on top of our private bus. From the takeout it is a short 2 hours drive then a 55-minute flight back to Kathmandu - the mountain views on a clear day are outstanding as the flight goes right along the main Himalayas. A welcome hot shower at the hotel to finish - Nice!

(Included: All meals except evening meal in Kathmandu)

Day 11:

An extra day for sight-seeing, retail therapy or a chilled beer in the sun to finish your trip in style!

(Included: Breakfast)

Day 12:

After a rather leisurely breakfast we take you back to the airport for your return flight home. Or why not stay a few days longer and go on a spectacular Safari at Chitwan National Park.

(Included: Breakfast)

Options

Safari:

3 Days – 2 Nights

Staying at the luxurious Temple Tiger Camp is a great way to finish off your trip. Set in the heart of the Royal Chitwan National Park you have some fantastic opportunities to see the prolific bird life, not to mention occasional sightings of the Royal Bengal Tiger, rhinos and an amazing array of other wildlife. Naturalists are on hand with their seemingly endless supply of knowledge to answer your queries regarding all the species of animal in the park. The lodge is made entirely of local materials and blends in beautifully with the environment. There is a range of activities to enjoy from elephant safaris to jungle walks, to bathing the elephants in the glorious warm water or just relaxing in the serene surroundings of the Lodge. Meals are all-inclusive and are a wonderful combination of Western and Nepali dishes.

Accommodation is in spacious safari tents with twin beds and separate hot and cold showers.

Since you do have to book in advance we strongly recommend that you try and think how you will feel at the end of the river journey - if returning to Kathmandu will be the option or getting close to nature, bathing elephants and drinking a cool drink whilst overlooking the bewildering fresh green jungle may be better? What a choice!

Trekking:

Another option well worth considering if you are looking for a longer trip is to go trekking. Trekking in Nepal is an intense cultural experience as well as an exploration of one of the world's most hiker-friendly and spectacular environments. Nepal has a staggering number of potential routes for trekkers. These are not just a pathway designed for recreational use, but also a working transportation network for goods and people. While trekking you will see the great diversity of Nepal. Villages embrace many ethnic groups and cultures. The beauty and attraction of the Nepal Himalaya emanates not only from the mountains themselves, but also from their surroundings.

Our experienced guides can take you on easy low level treks, right up to 7,000m + peaks, from 4 days to 33 days. Please visit our website or contact us for more information on trekking in Nepal.

Mountain Biking:

We can offer mountain biking trips for those who wish to extend their stay in Nepal. We offer a Cross Country Nepal trip, starting in Kathmandu, before heading down the Kathmandu Valley and on into Chitwan National Park. The trip then heads off west to take in the Pokhara and Annapurna regions. This is a great way to see what Nepal really has to offer. Trips can be arranged for 7, 10 or 14 days.

We also offer a 2 week Downhill mountain biking trip for those wishing to exert a little less effort. We will ride for 3 days down the Kathmandu Valley before heading to the temple of Goddess Manakamana and the cable car that rises some 1600m up the mountain side. Following on from that we transfer to the Pokhara/Annapurna region and take a flight part way round the Annapurna Circuit Trek and then spend 3 days riding downhill back to Pokhara. This trip is a 14 day trip.

Finally, we are also able to offer Cross Country trips based around Pokhara. These tend to be around 7 days in length but can be run to suit your timescales.

We have a range of high spec (full suspension, disc brakes etc.) Commencal bikes available for hire for those not wishing to take their own bikes to Nepal.

Please contact us for any information about extending your trip with any of the options mentioned here.

The Details

What Is Included?:

- Transfers to and from Kathmandu Airport and the hotel. If you provide us with your arrival details we will meet you at the airport.
- Accommodation – the 2 nights before and after the river trip. This is based on a share twin basis with someone else on the trip.
- All tented accommodation.
- Transfers to and from the rivers, including local flights.
- All meals from breakfast on Day 3 to lunch on Day 10 – unless stated above.
- All kayak and rafting equipment, including the best in kayaks, buoyancy aids, helmets, cags and spray decks.
- All camping equipment (sleeping bags and thermorests excluded)
- Qualified and experienced guides and safety kayakers.
- All necessary permits and licenses.
- A very cool AdventureX t-shirt.

Please note: Not included are flights, visas, departure taxes, travel insurance, inoculations, sleeping bags, thermarests, DVD of the trip, beer/wine kitty (if applicable) , personal items or gratuities. You will also need to budget for meals in towns (see itinerary) – a 3 course meal can be between \$2 -\$6 dependent upon meal and restaurant.

Getting There:

If you have any queries or need a hand at all in arranging your flight to and from Kathmandu please give us a shout. AdventureX have teamed up with KE Travel – fully ABTA (J1763) and ATOL (2808) bonded so your flights can now be booked easily and professionally. Our service is extremely competitive on price and your seat can be held in most cases by just a deposit. Please note though that Nepal is becoming a very popular destination so flights do tend to get booked up quite quickly.

Do I Need A Visa?:

The best and easiest way to get your visa is to apply to the Nepalese Embassy in London by post before you leave. The cost is currently £20 for 60 days (single entry). Just send your passport, photo plus application form (downloadable from website) plus £20 cheque and your visa will be with you within 2 weeks. For full information, visit http://www.nepembassy.org.uk/visa_information.html .

Alternatively you can get visas at Kathmandu airport. If you choose to do this you must have a passport photo and new crisp US dollars - as they will not accept payment in any other form (including wrinkly notes). However be prepared for long queues!

Either way please make sure you have at least 6 months validity on your passport prior to departure. Give us a call for more information.

Injections:

We recommend that you contact your Medical centre for professional advice. As a guide you will be looking at Hepatitis A and B, Typhoid and Polio and have an up-to-date Tetanus shot. Some of these immunizations take weeks or months to do correctly, so don't leave it to the last minute and do check with your local health department for more detailed information. A thorough dental check-up is also strongly recommended before you leave.

Dysentery is the normal ailment that travellers to Nepal are struck with. With this in mind, be careful of where and what you eat in Kathmandu before the trip. Sanitation is a top priority on our trip and must be adhered to at all times.

Malaria has not been completely eradicated in Nepal, though it is only present on the Terai (southern Nepal). Basically unless you are going to spend considerable time in the game parks in southern Nepal (Chitwan National Park etc) it's not a huge worry as the rivers are essentially bug free.

Without a doubt the most effective deterrent against malaria is to protect against mosquito bites with long, tightly woven clothing and mosquito repellent. Mosquito repellent should be brought from home.

If you have any relevant medical conditions please make sure they are listed on your booking form. On all journeys we carry a very comprehensive first aid kit, but if you want to bring your own personal basic first aid kit by all means do.

Exchange Rates:

As a reference the Nepali Rupee currently stands at (time of print) – Nepali Rupee 70.65 to 1\$ and for the British pound it is 129 to £1 – however it changes frequently. To change your currency once in Nepal, use only certified foreign exchange points or alternatively your hotel as there are a lot of people who will jump at the chance to help – this is definitely not recommended! GBP£ and US\$ are the most widely accepted currencies to exchange for Rupees.

Weather:

One of the most fascinating things about Nepal is that in the space of a hundred miles you can go from the coldest and most bitter conditions on earth to the sweltering heat of the North Indian Plain. In general it's best to plan for sub-tropical to temperate conditions on the rivers. Temperatures in the daytime range from 25-32 degrees centigrade, with evenings being 8 to 10 degrees cooler. A fleecy top for the evenings is recommended – although most nights you will probably have a campfire to keep the chill out. Expect typical northern hemisphere seasons.

Fitness and Safety:

You don't need to be superman/woman but we do recommend a certain level of fitness in order to get the most from any trip. There will be moments going through a class IV rapid that you'll wish you did a little more. All we ask is that if you have any medical conditions or problems that you do let us know as we take safety very, very seriously and it is our first priority. We employ some of the best rafting guides in the world. These men and women are whitewater professionals, trained in CPR, emergency wilderness first aid and swift-water rescue. They are highly experienced, and level headed in the most demanding and stressful situations and have devoted their lives to the navigation and understanding of whitewater rivers.

Dress Code:

On the river anything goes and with hot temperatures you will of course spend most of your time in your shorts and bathing cosies. However when it comes to the towns you must dress appropriately. Ladies should wear t-shirts/blouses and knee-length skirts or trousers (cut off combats do the trick!) and men should cover up their chests with shirts/t-shirts. The guys can usually get away with shorts but must be prepared to wear trousers when going to temples.

Personal Equipment:

We will send you all the information you need on what to bring and more importantly what not to bring, based on years of experience, so you do not have to worry. You will also find that most of the kit list you have already – very little specialised equipment will need to be bought. The best idea would be to travel as light as possible anyway as almost anything you need can be found in Kathmandu.

Finally:

It is imperative that you realise that you are entering an environment where the rules and realities of life are much different from the West. Certain events such as festivals sometimes delay the itineraries and are just part of everyday life in Asia. It's a big part of what makes Nepal magical, and in our opinion, it is by far outweighed by the brilliance of being able to journey through one of the world's last true frontiers. This is an awesome river expedition and one that you will remember for years to come!