



# Responsible Tourist Policy

## **Dream Nepal Travel & Tours**

Dream Nepal is a socially aware travel company, which endows with as much dedication to the society as it does to its true service. We promote responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well being of local people.

## **Welcome To Nepal**

In order to preserve the beauty of our country and have local people benefit as much as possible from your presence, we have put together this Responsible Tourist Policy. We want you to feel comfortable and enjoy Nepal to the fullest to which the following guidelines will contribute.

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## General Information

- The form of greeting in Nepal is 'Namaste' and is performed by joining the palms together
- Before entering a Nepali home, Temple, Stupa or any other religious site, please take off your shoes
- Seek permission first before entering a Hindu temple. Many Hindu temples do not allow westerners or non-Hindus to enter
- Leather articles are prohibited to be taken inside the temple precinct
- Walking around temples or stupas is traditionally done clockwise.
- Please dress appropriately. For woman it is recommended to cover knees and shoulders.
- Be careful not to use your spoon, fork or a hand being used for your eating to touch other's food, plate, cooking, utensil or the serving dish. Do not eat or drink from other people's plate or glass. It is considered impure by the Nepali people
- Please ask permission when taking photographs of people, and respect their answer
- Public displays of affection between man and woman are frowned upon
- Never touch anything with your feet or point the soles of your feet to a person or holy statue. This is considered highly insulting
- Remember: when a Nepali person shakes his head from left to right, he may mean 'yes'
  
- Eat in local restaurants and try the local cuisine
- We encourage you to buy locally produced souvenirs, as this is good for the local economy and encourages local craftsmanship
- Please don't buy any souvenirs made from threatened flora and / or fauna
- We recommend you to use public transport as much as possible, or share a car with more persons to minimise use of fuel for transportation

## Ecotourism Guidelines

- Let Nepal remain pristine for all times to come
- Do not take anything away, only memories
- Come, see and conserve
- Nothing beats walking
- What's made out of murder, do not buy. Ivory looks better on the elephant, and the shell on the tortoise
- Let the plants and animals for what they are. Taking away seeds and roots is illegal in many parts of the Himalaya
- Discourage the presence of wildlife by not leaving food scraps behind you during trekking
- Do not feed the wildlife as this can transmit diseases and lead to animals becoming dependent on hand-outs, which leads to unbalanced populations
- Get into a deal with only those tour operators / hotels who are sincere about energy conservation
- Trees are meant to grow - don't make an open fire.
- Littering is careless manners, burn or bury paper, and carry away all non-degradable garbage
- Keep the water source you are using clean, don't try detergents on streams and springs. Bury your waste, attend the call away from the water source
- Your guides and porters may know more about local conservation methods, so learn from them. Or else, help them learn
- Visitors who value local traditions encourage local cultures. Help local people gain a realistic view of life in Western countries
- If you travel by air, offset the environmental impact of emissions by purchasing a 'My Climate' ticket or 'Green' seat
- We encourage you to join our trips during the off-peak period to prevent overstraining resources (and you will avoid the crowds!)
- Respect social and cultural traditions and practices
- Let the local people know that you appreciate the unspoiled nature being there, so that they see its economic value

## **Trekking**

To help preserve the ecology and beauty, consider the following tips when trekking. One of the best things trekkers can do to reduce their impact is to lead by example. By picking up rubbish that you find on trekking routes, you will provide an example to local people who might never have considered the environmental impact of dumping waste beside the trail.

### **TREKKING RULES**

- Trekking may be undertaken for only one place or area at a time
- Trekkers should follow the route prescribed for them by the Department of Immigration (trekking along non-prescribed routes may create serious problems regarding security, food and accommodation)
- It is advised to arrange treks through registered trekking agencies to prevent any accident, which may occur at any time during the trekking period
- It is advisable to take along an authorised guide and porter
- Be careful with matches around wooded or grassy areas
- Be most economical with all fuel, especially the local firewood. (Use minimal fuel for showers and discourage campfires. Trekkers are strictly forbidden to cut any green forest resources and to kill any wildlife. Give preference to lodges and trekking companies that do not use firewood and encourage their efforts to conserve the environment)
- Make sure you are at least 30 metres away from any water source while washing or attending to the call. Bury excreta and toilet papers and use biodegradable toiletries. Do not litter
- Never buy any wildlife trophies or animal products from the local poachers (it is against the law of the land)
- Do not collect any wild flowers, plants, fossils, orchids, rocks, etc. unless you have the permission from the concerned office for scientific research
- Cutting trees, shooting wildlife and fishing without license is strictly prohibited
- Always camp at the prescribed sites (if there is no arrangement as such, then camp on open ground or on the bank of the river. Do not camp inside a bush cutting away branches of trees)

- Never pollute the clear mountain water or litter the path with cigarette butts, tin cans, toilet papers, etc. Please bury biodegradable waste
- Do not mark initials on trees and rocks. Nature is more beautiful when left undefiled by human hands
- We sincerely request you to enlighten your porters, Sherpas, guides, villagers to respect nature and how to conserve it. With your help, our natural beauty will be alive for generations. In return, Nepal's gift to you will be vibrant living memories
- Be aware that the Himalaya is someone else's backyard, which deserves the care you'd want other to give yours

### **SOCIAL INTERACTION**

- During your trek, you will come in contact with many village schools. Please communicate your conservation ideas, knowledge and experiences with the local schoolteachers so that a multiplier effect of conservation messages could be radiated to all the children. If possible, please also try to make the children know how to respect nature and natural resources
- Never give anything directly to the children. It encourages children to beg. It might give you momentary satisfaction but the begging child could also turn a professional beggar tomorrow (if you really want to give money, make the donation to a foundation or somebody who is in a position to do something useful for the community)
- Be friendly with your porters and guides. You will enjoy your trip more.
- While taking photographs be sure that you are not intruding onto others privacy
- Respect the villagers and their local traditions. In return, they will give you warm hospitality
- Please do not spoil this natural heritage by thoughtless negligence. (The slightest negligence and misunderstanding on your part can directly have a jarring cumulative impact on the delicate balance of nature)
- In some areas, local communities have established their own conservation practices. Please make an effort to understand them and to observe them
- Please do not remove any religious artefacts from the area

## Health & Safety

Trekking in the mountains is a rewarding and unforgettable experience. However, it is important to keep your safety in mind. Weather conditions can change any moment and in case of an accident, medical help is not always easily available. Take a look at the following guidelines and tips on health and safety for preparation and during your trip:

- Read about the destination you are going to and make sure you know the details of your trek
- Make sure you have proper clothing for all weather conditions
- Make sure you have the necessary (mountain) equipment suitable for the specific terrain
- Always carry: enough warm clothes, a refillable water bottle, biodegradable soap, a first aid kit, a torch and iodine and flavouring to ensure safe drinking water (Vitamin C tablets neutralises the iodine taste)
- Be prepared for challenging weather conditions, especially if you go trekking in high altitude areas (above 3.000m / 10.000 ft.). "Wind chill", the combined effects of high winds and cold air, can dramatically lower the body temperature. This is dangerous and potentially fatal. It is therefore very important to be properly equipped when walking high up in the mountains in bad weather
- Inform yourself about altitude sickness if you go trekking in altitudes above 3.000m
- Make sure someone knows your trekking itinerary and when you are supposed to be back from your trek
- Make sure you are properly insured and take your insurance details with you, including emergency numbers. Leave your insurance details with somebody at home as well
- Take your mobile phone with you (if you go to very remote places, you may consider taking a satellite phone)
- Especially if you go without a guide, make sure you know the basics of first aid
- Carry a whistle with you (if you get lost, it is easier to get attention with a whistle)

- Never walk alone, go with a friend or porter / guide
- Always carry warm clothes and rain gear with you
- Always carry a first aid kit with you
- Always carry enough water and snacks; make sure you know when you can restock / refill your water
- Always carry a torch (and spare batteries) with you
- Personal hygiene is important in order not to get sick: always wash your hands after using the toilet and before eating (if no water and soap is available, use disinfecting gel)
- If possible, try to get information about the weather forecast
- You will regularly encounter (caravans of) mules or yaks during your treks in the Himalaya: stay on the mountain side while you wait for them to pass and don't go too close to the ridge (the animals usually carry heavy and wide loads and they might kick you off the mountain if you don't watch out)
- In warm weather, the principle hazards are sunburn, windburn and dehydration. Sunhats, sun cream, and ample water can prevent serious sunburn or heatstroke
- Make sure you have a map and compass and / or GPS and know how to use it (especially if you go without a guide / porter)
- Don't take unnecessary risks by taking overly long or difficult routes
- As far as possible, register yourself in the guesthouse / homestay where you are and / or tell where you are going next

### **ALTITUDE SICKNESS**

Altitude sickness, also known as Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), if not treated when symptoms first appear, can cause death. AMS is the effect of altitude on those who ascend too rapidly to elevations of 3.000m or above. Early mountain sickness manifests itself as headache, loss of appetite and sleeplessness. Being young, strong and fit doesn't necessarily help. Medicine is no substitute for hurried descent or evacuation to lower altitude. If a doctor is available, he may give medicine and oxygen. However, the patient must go down even if given treatment.

## **White Water Rafting**

We suggest the following guidelines as good practices:

- Try to limit the size of your group. An excessively large group will geometrically compound your impact on the riverside environment
- Leave your camping beach cleaner than when you arrived - good raft guides always organise a 'sweep' of the beach before departing
- Paper and cardboard waste should be burnt. We suggest that you keep your own small plastic bag for film cartons, old band-aids, tissues and cigarette butts. Burn the contents on the fire when directed by your guide; note that cooking fire is considered holy, so always ask before burning anything
- All non-biodegradable items, like tins and bottles, should be washed and carried out, off the river. It is environmentally unacceptable to bury these as the next monsoon will seep them down the river and expose them on another beach for people to cut their feet on
- Vegetable waste, such as onion skins and potato peelings, should be buried well away from the camping site below monsoon high water level
- Food scraps, washing up water, etc. should be disposed of in the main current of the river (not an eddy). Greasing washing up water should first be filtered through kitchen paper and the paper burnt later
- Toilet pits should be dug well away from camp and below the monsoon high water level. Carry a lighter or matches and burn your toilet paper

## **Accommodation Guidelines**

Your best practice could save nature, so please take the following guidelines into consideration during your stay in Nepal:

- Please turn off the lights when you leave the room
- Do not flush too often
- Please decide: towels on the floor means, they should be changed and towels on the towel-rail means, they will be used again
- Please follow the rules and guidelines of the accommodation's sustainability policies

### **ACTION IN CASE OF FIRE** (on discovering fire):

- Leave the room immediately ensuring all other occupants
- Advise reception
- Leave the building by the nearest available exit
- Report to the assembly point, which is located at the reception
- Do not run
- Do not re-enter the building