

Earthbound Expeditions

Buddhist Circuit Tour India and Nepal

13 days, from US$1,687 per person

Duration	Group size	Country
13 days	**15 people**	**India**

Buddhist Circuit Tour India and Nepal Overview

A Buddhist pilgrimage tour in Nepal and India, starting in Nepal with Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha, and including Bodhgaya in India.

Buddhist pilgrimage tour in Nepal and India
This Buddhist Circuit pilgrimage tour starts in Nepal and includes Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha, and Bodhgaya in India, where the Buddha attained enlightenment.
The tour visits the major Buddhist sacred places, including Lumbini, Boudhanath, Namo Buddha, Kushinagar, Patna, Rajgir, Bodhgaya and Sarnath. Many of the Buddhist temples you visit in Nepal and India are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. We call this the Buddhist Circuit tour.

The tour then goes to the lake city of Pokhara for a break in nature, followed by a visit to Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha. After Lumbini, we enter India and visit Varanasi, Sarnath, Kushinagar, Patna and Bodhgaya, where the major events of the Buddha's life took place. Because it visits all four main sites of the Buddha's life, this is a complete Buddhist pilgrimage tour.

After visiting the Ganges in Varanasi, you can fly to Delhi or Kathmandu for your flight home. The trip can be extended to the Taj Mahal and Jaipur (the Golden Triangle), or to the Buddhist nation of Bhutan. Please write to us to adapt the tour to your plans.

Earthbound Expeditions is recommended by Lonely Planet, TripAdvisor, The New York Times, The Guardian and many other national and international newspapers and magazines. The Buddhist Circuit Tour costs $1,687. For more information on trekking, hiking and travel in Nepal, please contact us.

Itinerary

Day 1

Arrive in Kathmandu (1,350m)

Arrive at Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu. Our representative meets you and transfers you to the hotel. The distance from the airport to the hotel is no more than 7 kilometres. Overnight at the hotel.

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

Day 2

Namo Buddha and Patan Durbar Square

Drive to Namo Buddha, about 40 kilometres from Kathmandu, where Shakyamuni Buddha is believed to have fed his own flesh to a starving tigress. Visit the monastery and stupa. In the afternoon, visit Patan Durbar Square. Return to the hotel for the night.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast

Day 3

Fly to Lumbini and visit the Lumbini Garden

After breakfast at the hotel, fly to Bhairahawa airport and drive to Lumbini. In the afternoon, visit the Lumbini Garden, including the Ashoka Pillar, the Maya Devi Temple, the Sacred Pond and the monasteries within the Maya Devi Garden. Pilgrims meditate quietly under the large tree near the pond. Overnight at the hotel.

Altitude: 150 m On foot: Easy walking, 1–2 hrs Night: Hotel, Lumbini Meals: Breakfast

Day 4

Kapilvastu, Sagarhawa, Gotihawa, Kudan and Niglihawa

Visit other Buddhist sites near Lumbini. Tilaurakot, or Kapilvastu, was the capital of the Shakya kingdom, where the Buddha was born. Sagarhawa, Gotihawa, Kudan and Niglihawa are also connected with Buddhism and its history. Overnight at the hotel.

Altitude: 150 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Hotel, Lumbini Meals: Breakfast

Day 5

Drive to Vaishali and Patna (Pataliputra, Ashoka's capital) via Kesaria

Drive to the Nepal and India border at Gorakhpur, then on to Vaishali and Patna, visiting Kesaria on the way. The Buddha visited Vaishali on many occasions. Several important monasteries and shrines there were described by the Chinese pilgrim Faxian in the 5th century. After the death of the Buddha, the Second Buddhist Council was held at Vaishali to set rules of conduct. Overnight at the hotel.

Altitude: 55 m On foot: None, 8–9 hr drive Night: Hotel, Patna Meals: Breakfast

Day 6

Drive to Bodhgaya via Nalanda and Rajgir

Bodhgaya is about 144 kilometres by road from Vaishali and Patna. On the way, visit Rajgir, an ancient city in the north-eastern Indian state of Bihar. It is surrounded by hills and known for its holy sites. Remains of the Cyclopean Wall, which encircled the city centuries ago, still stand in the centre. Close by, Venu Vana park was once home to a monastery built for the Buddha. The shield-shaped Japanese Temple contains a large Buddha statue. Nearby there are hot springs believed to have medicinal properties. Overnight at the hotel.

Altitude: 110 m On foot: None, 5–6 hr drive Night: Hotel, Bodhgaya Meals: Breakfast

Day 7

Bodhgaya sightseeing: Mahabodhi Temple, Bodhi Tree, Niranjana River, Sujata Kuti and Great Buddha Statue

A full day in Bodh Gaya. Visit the Bodhi tree, Animeshlochana Chaitya, the Ratnachankramana, the Ratnagara, the Ajapala Nigrodha tree, the Rajyatana tree and Muchalinda pond. Also visit the monasteries built around the complex by many Buddhist countries. Overnight at the hotel.

Altitude: 110 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Hotel, Bodhgaya Meals: Breakfast

Day 8

Drive to Varanasi and Sarnath: Dhamek Stupa, Mulagandha Kuti and Ashoka Pillar

The drive to Varanasi is about 250 kilometres and takes about 6 hours. Sarnath is a further 13 kilometres north-west. Visit the Dhamek Stupa, the site of the Buddha's first teaching, the Mulagandha Kuti and the Ashoka Pillar. Sarnath is near the confluence of the Ganges and Varuna rivers. Overnight at the hotel.

Altitude: 80 m On foot: None, 6 hr drive Night: Hotel, Varanasi Meals: Breakfast

Day 9

Drive to Kushinagar: Mahaparinirvana Temple and cremation stupa

The drive is about 220 kilometres and takes about 6 hours. Kushinagar is where the Buddha died and entered nirvana. Visit the Mahaparinirvana Temple, where the Buddha took his last breath, the Ramabhar Stupa, the cremation site of the Buddha, and the Japanese Temple. Return to the hotel in the evening for dinner and an overnight stay.

Altitude: 80 m On foot: None, 6 hr drive Night: Hotel, Kushinagar Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 10

Drive from Kushinagar to Lumbini and fly to Kathmandu

After breakfast at the hotel, drive to Lumbini, Nepal. The drive is about 142 kilometres and takes 4 to 5 hours. From Lumbini, transfer to Bhairahawa airport for an evening flight to Kathmandu, then transfer to the hotel to rest. Overnight at the hotel.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, 4–5 hr drive Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast

Day 11

Kathmandu sightseeing: Pharping, Boudhanath and Swayambhunath

A full day visiting Buddhist sites in Kathmandu: the great stupas of Swayambhunath and Boudhanath, and Pharping, 19 kilometres south of Kathmandu, where you visit a Buddhist monastery and walk around the pilgrimage sites. Drive back to Kathmandu, where the rest of the day is free for shopping and walking around the market. Overnight at the hotel.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast

Day 12

Departure

We take you to the international airport for your departure. Please arrive at the international airport three hours before your flight time.

Altitude: 1,350 m On foot: None, departure day Night: No overnight Meals: Breakfast

What's included

- Cost Includes

Not included

- Cost Excludes

Photos, videos and reviews of this trip: earthbound.rajansimkhada.com/buddhist-circuit-tour-india-and-nepal