

Annapurna Circuit Trek via Ngawal



Trip Overview

The Annapurna Circuit Trek with Tilicho Lake and Ngawal is a spectacular variation of Nepal's iconic long-distance trek, designed for trekkers seeking both cultural depth and alpine adventure. This enhanced route follows the classic Annapurna Circuit while incorporating two remarkable highlights: the scenic high trail through Ngawal village and a side trip to Tilicho Lake (4,919m)—one of the world's highest glacial lakes.

Starting from the subtropical valleys of Besisahar, the trail gradually ascends through lush forests, cascading waterfalls, and traditional Gurung and Manangi settlements. After Chame, the trek branches onto the high-altitude upper route via Ngawal, offering more solitude, dramatic mountain views, and deeper immersion into Tibetan-influenced culture.

From the alpine town of Manang, the trail detours westward to Tilicho Base Camp, leading to the surreal blue waters of Tilicho Lake, surrounded by towering snow-capped giants. After returning to the main trail, the trek continues to Thorong Phedi and over the formidable Thorong La Pass (5,416m)—the highest navigable pass in Nepal. The journey then descends into the spiritual and desert-like region of Muktinath and Lower Mustang, before concluding in the lush mid-hills around Tatopani and Ghorepani.

This version of the Annapurna Circuit is ideal for trekkers who want to step off

the beaten path and embrace more rugged landscapes while experiencing the full diversity of the Himalayas—from rice terraces to glaciers, from Hindu temples to Buddhist monasteries.

Total Trip Days: 14 DAYS

Region: Annapurna Region

Max Altitude: 5416 meters

Activity: Trekking

Difficulty: Moderate to Fairly Challenging

Trip Highlights

- Ngawal High Route - A quieter, more scenic path above Pisang with sweeping views of Annapurna II and IV
- Tilicho Lake Excursion - Trek to one of the highest lakes in the world at 4,919 meters
- Cultural Diversity - Interact with Gurung, Thakali, and Tibetan Buddhist communities
- Thorong La Pass (5,416m) - Cross Nepal's most famous and rewarding mountain pass
- Flexible Exit Routes - From Muktinath, optional drive-outs via Jomsom or trek onward to Ghorepani
- Natural Hot Springs - Relax in Tatopani after crossing the Himalayas
- Epic Mountain Views - Close-up views of Annapurna I, II, III, IV, Gangapurna, Tilicho Peak, Dhaulagiri, and more

Itinerary

Day 1:

At an arrival at the international airport we will be picked up and then transferred to the hotel. Check in at the hotel and stay overnight.

Day 2:

Set off from Kathmandu in the early morning in to reach Jagat in the early evening. The road out of the Kathmandu Valley and onto the lower-lying lands follows the Trishuli River, where you may see people enjoying white water rafting. There are plenty of good coffee and lunch stops on the way. The road turns towards Pokhara, and we follow this good road until we turn off at Besisahar and enter Manang, with its more winding roads.

Day 3:

We start our trek from Jagat and trek to Chame Village. Chame is a beautiful village and is a district headquarter of Manang district.

Day 4:

Chame to Pisang is a trail through the sparsely populated Pine forest apple farms, etc. It is neither long nor tedious walk to reach the Pisang village. We pass through Bhratang and Dhukur Pokhari village to reach Pisang village.

Day 5:

A challenging day but with views that make up for the ache in our legs! From the top of the Kang La Pass (5240 meters, 17192 Ft.), we see the stunning mountains of Annapurna II, Gangapurna, and Tilicho Peak. Finally, we reach Ngawal.

Day 6:

Today our bodies appreciate the shorter trekking time and less steep trails. Our spirits also enjoy the rich Buddhist heritage we will see today. Leaving Ngawal, we drop down, passing Sher Gompa and surrounding settlements and even Milarepa's cave. Milarepa is a major figure in the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism and was a dedicated yogi, spiritual leader, and teacher. Born around 1052, he travelled to what is now Nepal, and various sites are dedicated to his memory. We also pass Braga Gompa, which is around 900 years old, and the Gompa of Godzo before crossing the Ghatte Khola and reaching the town of Manang, where we overnight.

Day 7:

On the acclimatization day we will keep our body moving and keep it warm so that it can acclimatize to the surrounding altitude. We have multiple options on this day to choose from where we want to go for acclimatization. Ice Lake, Gangapurna Glacier view point etc. are the locations we can chose to visit on this day.

Day 8:

Another short day in this stunning Tibetan-like landscape. There are steep sections of the trail, but some shops in Manang are exciting. And some artifacts are being sold on the trail. But remember, the Thorong La Pass is coming, so don't buy too much!

Day 9:

The stark landscape continues, and there is a landslide area to pass today. Pay close attention to your guide's advice. Since it is a relatively short trek, you should spend the afternoon hiking to High Camp in preparation for Tomorrow's high-altitude pass crossing. Alternatively, enjoy the surrounding mountains, Annapurna II, III, IV, Pisang Peak, Chulu, and Tilicho, while enjoying a cinnamon roll. Yes, last time we were there, there was a bakery at one of which we highly recommend is make complete preparation for the morning. We will be setting off early to cross the Thorong La Pass so please pack your belongings the night before and get a good night's rest.

Day 10:

The stark landscape continues, and there is a landslide area to pass today. Pay close attention to your guide's advice. Since it is a relatively short trek, you should spend the afternoon hiking to High Camp in preparation for Tomorrow's high-altitude pass crossing. Alternatively, enjoy the surrounding mountains, Annapurna II, III, IV, Pisang Peak, Chulu, and Tilicho, while enjoying a cinnamon roll. Yes, last time we were there, there was a bakery at one of which we highly recommend is make complete preparation for the morning. We will be setting off early to cross the Thorong La Pass so please pack your belongings the night before and get a good night's rest.

Day 11:

After breakfast, you have time to visit the temple of Muktinath with its 108 water spouts. No need to bathe in them all unless you are Hindu or particularly enjoy cold showers! Then we trek down to the airport town of Jomsom. Suppose you wish to spend more time in Muktinath or explore the interesting village of Kagbeni on the route. In that case, it is possible to take a jeep down from Muktinath to Jomsom or Kagbeni (then it's around a 2-3 hour walk from Kagbeni to Jomsom). In Jomsom, we find many shops, bars, and hotels to relax in.

Day 12:

This itinerary includes the early morning flight to Pokhara, which gives you a whole day in this vibrant lakeside town. An alternative would be to continue your trek for another 3 or 4 days down through Mustang and perhaps up to

the famous Poon Hill. Please discuss this with us when booking your trek.

Day 13:

After spending relaxing day in Pokhara we will then head to Kathmandu. We will take a short flight back to Kathmandu and stay overnight. You can use the free time on this day on your disposal for personal activities.

Day 14:

Our airport representative will help you with checkout procedure and then escort you to the airport for final departure from Nepal for your onward journey.

Route Map

14 Days

ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT TREK VIA NGAWAL



ALTITUDE CHART

