

# Annapurna Circuit Trek with Tilicho lake



## 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:** 17 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 Trisuli 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:**

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 Pisang we pass through small rivers, small villages, mani walls etc. to reach Manang. 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 6:**

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 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 choose to visit on this day.

### **Day 8:**

Today's journey begins in the charming village of Manang, situated at 3,540 meters, and ascends steadily toward Sri Kharka at 4,020 meters (13,188 ft). Covering a distance of approximately 10 kilometers in about 3 hours, the trail offers a blend of natural beauty and cultural encounters. As trekkers leave behind the bustling settlement of Manang, the path winds through alpine woodlands and scattered juniper shrubs, with occasional sightings of local wildlife. The gradual ascent allows for acclimatization while providing ever-expanding views of the Annapurna and Gangapurna ranges. Passing by traditional stone houses and ancient monasteries, the route diverges from the main Annapurna Circuit, leading into quieter, less-trodden trails. Reaching Sri Kharka, trekkers are welcomed by the serene atmosphere of this small settlement, nestled amid towering cliffs and highland pastures—an ideal resting point before heading toward Tilicho Lake.

### **Day 9:**

Today's trek leads adventurers from the quiet settlement of Sri Kharka to Tilicho Base Camp, covering approximately 9.2 kilometers over 4 to 5 hours. The trail contours along steep hillsides and narrow pathways carved into rugged cliffs, offering thrilling views and a sense of remoteness that heightens the alpine adventure. Although the terrain is rocky and occasionally exposed, it is incredibly scenic, with panoramic vistas of snow-capped peaks, deep valleys, and cascading glaciers. Along the way, trekkers may encounter wildlife such as Himalayan blue sheep and soaring eagles. As the route approaches Tilicho Base Camp, located at 3,540 meters (11,615 ft), the landscape transforms into a stark, high-altitude desert with dramatic contrasts of light and shadow. Upon arrival, the base camp offers basic facilities and a well-earned rest, serving as the launching point for the next day's much-anticipated journey to Tilicho Lake.

### **Day 10:**

Today's journey takes trekkers on a breathtaking adventure to Tilicho Lake, one of the highest lakes in the world, nestled at an altitude of 4,919 meters (16,138 ft). The trail begins early from the base camp, gradually ascending through rugged, barren terrain with dramatic rock formations and sweeping views of the surrounding Himalayan peaks, including Tilicho Peak and the Grand Barrier. Upon reaching the lake, its surreal turquoise waters—surrounded by snow-capped mountains—offer a moment of awe and

serenity, making the challenging hike worthwhile. After spending time soaking in the beauty and taking photographs, the group retraces its steps and descends carefully back to Sri Kharka (3,540 meters / 11,615 ft). The total trek covers approximately 9.2 kilometers and takes around 4 to 5 hours, depending on pace and weather conditions. This day offers both a physical challenge and an unforgettable spiritual experience in the heart of the Himalayas.

### **Day 11:**

Today's trek leads from Sri Kharka to Yak Kharka, covering a distance of approximately 10 kilometers over the course of 3 hours. The trail begins with a gentle descent, rejoining the main Annapurna Circuit route near Khangsar Village, then gradually ascends through alpine meadows and juniper-covered slopes. As trekkers climb higher, the landscape opens up to expansive views of the Annapurna range, and it's common to encounter grazing yaks and blue sheep along the trail. The air becomes thinner as you reach Yak Kharka at 4,020 meters (13,188 ft), a peaceful pastureland surrounded by towering peaks. This relatively moderate day helps with acclimatization while offering stunning mountain vistas and a tranquil trekking experience amidst the high Himalayas.

### **Day 12:**

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 13:**

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 14:**

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 15:**

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 16:**

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 17:**

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**

# 16 Days

## ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT TREK WITH TILICHO LAKE



ALTITUDE CHART

