

# Hindu Pilgrimage Short



## Trip Overview

This compact 4-day pilgrimage is designed for travelers who want a deep, well-paced taste of Nepal's major Hindu shrines without long road transfers. It combines the spiritual heart of the Kathmandu Valley Pashupatinath's riverside cremation ghats and tantric shrines, the layered ritual worlds of Swayambhunath and Budhanilkantha, and the energetic, hilltop devotion at Dakshinkali with a half-day excursion to Manakamana Temple via the famous Kurintar cable car. The program minimizes backtracking, schedules holy sites at times when rituals are most visible (early morning and late afternoon aartis), and leaves guests with one optional farewell visit on the final day depending on flight times. It's paced so you leave with a clear sense of the valley's living Hindu practice and a refreshingly personal experience at Manakamana.

**Total Trip Days:** 4 Days

## Trip Highlights

- Pashupatinath evening aarti and direct observation of living funeral

rites

- Sunrise at Swayambhu and contemplative time at Budhanilkantha
- Manakamana hill shrine via Kurintar cable car for a hands-on hill pilgrimage

## **Itinerary**

### **Day 1:**

You arrive at Tribhuvan International Airport and are met by your guide and driver; after a short orientation at the hotel, the day is intentionally gentle to allow time for arrival and acclimatization. Late afternoon you head to Pashupatinath where the riverbank life temple priests, pilgrims, mendicants and the open cremation ghats provides an immediate, unvarnished lesson in the Hindu social and ritual order. Your guide will walk you through etiquette for observing the ghats, explain the Pashupati iconography, and take you to vantage points where the evening aarti (if scheduled) crowns the day. After the aarti, a brief walk to nearby Guhyeshwari or a tea stop near the temple allows you to debrief with your guide about the meanings encountered; the evening is for rest and a quiet dinner at a hotel chosen for proximity to the next morning's activities.

### **Day 2:**

Today is a full valley day planned with ritual timing in mind. Begin at sunrise with a climb through Swayambhunath's terraces where the Morning Prayer wheels and the city-wide view set the tone for contemplation; your guide will explain how Swayambhu functions as both a Buddhist stupa and a signifier in Newar syncretic devotional life. Mid-morning you visit Budhanilkantha to view the remarkable reclining Vishnu image set in a serene pond an important stop for many Hindu pilgrims who seek blessings and a quiet moment by the water. After a leisurely local lunch, the afternoon transfers you to Dakshinkali, a temple on the southern rim of the Kathmandu Valley well known for animal sacrifice in certain ritual contexts and for intense, localized devotion to the goddess Kali. Your guide will prepare you for what you will see, explain the ritual logic behind offerings and, if appropriate, facilitate a safe, respectful place from which to observe or participate in a small offering. Return to Kathmandu for an evening discussion about the day's ritual forms and their place in living Nepalese Hindu practice.

### **Day 3:**

On day three you depart early for Kurintar (the cable-car base) for a full morning visit to Manakamana Temple one of Nepal's most visited hill shrines and reachable by a comfortable 2.8 km cable car ride that climbs from the river valley up to the temple complex. The cable car allows visitors of all ages easy access to the temple's terrace, where pilgrims traditionally make offerings and ask for "manako kamana" (wishes of the heart). Your guide will explain Manakamana's ritual economy (offerings, prasād, and the shrine's management) and ensure time for an extended darshan as well as for photographing the panoramic hill views. After a relaxed hilltop lunch, you ride the cable car back to Kurintar and return to Kathmandu in the late afternoon, leaving the evening free for quiet reflection or an optional visit to a local temple of personal interest.

Logistics note: Manakamana is accessed from Kurintar by the cable car (ride approx. 10–15 minutes uphill; cable length approx. 2.8 km); the drive from central Kathmandu to Kurintar commonly takes around 2–3 hours depending on traffic.

#### **Day 4:**

On the final day we keep the morning flexible based on flight time. For early departures, transfers to Tribhuvan Airport are arranged with time allowances to clear domestic/international check-in. Revisit a favorite shrine for a final private puja arranged through your guide, or explore a market for offerings and small souvenirs such as rudraksha beads, vermilion (tika) and shawls for temple priests. Your guide assists with any last-minute ritual needs (arranging a small personalized puja in a quiet temple or a blessing from a priest for onward travel). The program ends with airport transfer and heartfelt farewells.