

Long Buddhist Pilgrimage Tour



Trip Overview

This 10-day Buddhist pilgrimage tour is designed for travelers who wish to immerse themselves in the sacred landscape of Nepal's Buddhist heritage. It begins in the Kathmandu Valley with its ancient stupas, monasteries, and meditation caves, then journeys west to Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha. Along the way, the tour incorporates serene monasteries, legendary caves associated with Guru Padmasambhava, and the inspiring Lumbini monastic zone, where dozens of countries have built their temples in homage to the Buddha. This longer program allows deeper engagement with Buddhist rituals, meditation, and cultural exploration, creating a complete spiritual journey.

Total Trip Days: 10 Days

Trip Highlights

- Evening circumambulation at Boudhanath Stupa
- Pilgrimage to Swayambhunath, one of the oldest stupas in Nepal

- Sacred legends at Namobuddha Monastery
- Spiritual retreat at Pharping & Asura Cave of Guru Padmasambhava
- Visit to Maya Devi Temple at Lumbini, birthplace of the Buddha
- Exploration of Lumbini Monastic Zone, with monasteries from across the world
- Archaeological exploration of Tilaurakot – Kapilavastu
- Patan’s Buddhist heritage, including the Mahabouddha Temple

Itinerary

Day 1:

After arriving in Kathmandu, you are warmly greeted and transferred to your hotel. In the evening, the pilgrimage begins with a visit to Boudhanath Stupa, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most important Tibetan Buddhist centers outside Tibet. As the sun sets, the stupa glows under butter lamps lit by devotees. Circumambulating with monks, spinning prayer wheels, and enjoying the sound of mantras creates a serene introduction to Nepal’s Buddhist world.

Day 2:

The day starts at Swayambhunath, an iconic stupa perched on a hilltop overlooking Kathmandu. Known as the Monkey Temple, it is believed to have originated from a lotus that bloomed in a primordial lake. The site offers sweeping views of the valley while devotees and monks perform rituals around the stupa. In the afternoon, you visit Kapan Monastery, where Tibetan Buddhist practices and monastic teachings thrive. Visitors can attend meditation sessions, listen to teachings, and engage with the peaceful environment.

Day 3:

A full-day excursion takes you to Namobuddha, a sacred site tied to the legendary story of the compassionate prince who offered his body to a starving tigress. The monastery here is beautifully set amidst hills and terraced fields, offering a peaceful retreat. Visitors can participate in meditation, walk around the shrines, and enjoy a vegetarian meal in the monastic dining hall before returning to Kathmandu.

Day 4:

Today, you head south of the valley to Pharping, a powerful pilgrimage site associated with Guru Padmasambhava (Guru Rinpoche). The main attraction is the Asura Cave, where Padmasambhava meditated and attained realization. Devotees visit to offer butter lamps, recite prayers, and meditate in the sacred cave. The area also has numerous monasteries, prayer halls, and retreat centers, each adding to the spiritual vibrancy. You return to Kathmandu in the evening.

Day 5:

After breakfast, you take a short domestic flight to Bhairahawa in the western Terai plains, followed by a transfer to Lumbini, the birthplace of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha. The evening is free for a quiet walk around the sacred gardens.

Day 6:

This day is devoted to the Maya Devi Temple, marking the exact spot where Queen Maya Devi gave birth to Siddhartha Gautama in the 6th century BCE. Pilgrims gather here to pay homage at the marker stone and Ashokan pillar. The sacred pond where Maya Devi is believed to have bathed before childbirth adds to the atmosphere of devotion. The afternoon is spent exploring nearby monasteries built by Buddhist communities from around the world, including Thailand, Myanmar, China, and Germany, each reflecting distinct architectural styles and spiritual traditions.

Day 7:

The entire day is devoted to exploring the Lumbini Monastic Zone, where over 40 monasteries have been established. The experience is immersive, as you walk through serene grounds, engage with monks, and participate in meditation sessions. The peaceful environment and international presence of Buddhist traditions make this one of the most profound days of the pilgrimage.

Day 8:

Today's excursion takes you to Tilaurakot, about 27 km from Lumbini, believed to be the ancient capital of Kapilavastu where Prince Siddhartha spent his early life before renouncing worldly pleasures. The archaeological remains of the palace and surrounding structures evoke the Buddha's princely youth. The site also offers insights into early Buddhist history with its excavated stupas, gates, and monastic ruins. You return to Lumbini in the evening.

Day 9:

A morning flight brings you back to Kathmandu. In the afternoon, you explore Patan, home to one of the richest collections of Buddhist monuments in the valley. The Mahabouddha Temple, often called the "Temple of a Thousand Buddhas," is a highlight with its terracotta façade covered in countless Buddha images. A stroll through Patan's courtyards and monastic lanes completes the pilgrimage experience.

Day 10:

After breakfast, you are transferred to the airport for your international departure, carrying with you the blessings of Nepal's Buddhist pilgrimage sites.