



CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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Nepal

Trekking and Tracking

March 3 to 22, 2023



One-horned Rhino
© Tashi Tenzing

SAFARI OVERVIEW

Nepal is famous for both its majestic, towering Himalayas and its unique lowland wildlife such as tigers, rhinos, elephants, and sloth bears. In the Annapurna region, you will spend three days of moderate, porter-assisted trekking at elevations between 3,000ft and 7,000ft traversing through enchanting, forested river valleys, while dining and sleeping at mountain lodges. Game drive in Bardia and Chitwan National Parks in the lowlands to experience and photograph the abundance of Nepalese mammals, reptiles, and birds in their habitats which include woodlands, plains, and rivers. You'll travel by foot, jeep, and boat, and stay in top-quality lodging. Tashi Tenzing, the grandson of the famous Tenzing Norgay, will lead you on this adventure. He has been trekking in the Himalayas and leading wildlife safaris since the late 1980s, including successfully climbing Mount Everest three times, so it is sure to be an epic adventure!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience the thrill of tracking tigers, rhinos, elephants, and other enigmatic species in Bardia and Chitwan National Parks.
- Trek for three days in the Himalayas, assisted by porters, and sleep and dine at mountain lodges with all the creature comforts.
- Explore the cultural highlights of Kathmandu and Pokhara for one day each.
- Take in the magnificent Mount Everest during a one-hour, chartered, scenic flight.

LEADERS: Tashi Tenzing, assisted by resident porters, naturalists, and cultural guides.

DAYS: 19, including estimated travel time.

GROUP SIZE: 10.

COST: \$8,250 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for three internal flights), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 7.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Stay in charming mountain lodges while trekking, and in luxury camps or hotels during the remainder of the trip, all with private baths. See the *Accommodations* section on page 9.



Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Mar 3–4	Travel to Kathmandu, Nepal.		
Mar 5	Arrive in Kathmandu.	Gokarna Forest Resort, Kathmandu	D
Mar 6	Full day to visit cultural highlights in the Kathmandu Valley, including Boudhanath Stupa and Pashupatinath Temple.	Gokarna Forest Resort, Kathmandu	B, L, D
Mar 7	Fly to Pokhara and begin three days of easy, porter-assisted trekking. Trek to Majgaon at about 4,600ft.	Gurung Lodge, Majgaon	B, L, D
Mar 8	Trek through blooming rhododendrons and Gurung villages to Landruk at about 5,200ft.	La Bee Lodge, Landruk	B, L, D
Mar 9	Trek to Ghandruk at about 6,700ft.	Himalaya Lodge, Ghandruk	B, L, D
Mar 10	Full day in Pokhara for photography and birding along the lake and up at the Peace Pagoda.	The Pavilions Himalayas, Pokhara	B, L, D
Mar 11	Fly to Nepalgunj and then drive to Bardia National Park.	Karnali Lodge, Bardia National Park	B, L, D
Mar 12–15	Spend three full days on game drives in the heart of Bardia National Park's grasslands, woodlands, and riverbanks.	Karnali Lodge, Bardia National Park	B, L, D
Mar 16	Drive 200mi to Chitwan National Park and when you arrive, explore the lodge grounds for birds.	Kasara Resort, Chitwan National Park	B, L, D
Mar 17–18	Spend two full days in Chitwan National Park tracking tigers, elephants, and rhino.	Kasara Resort, Chitwan National Park	B, L, D
Mar 19	Drive to Bharatpur for flight to Kathmandu for lunch in the city and spend your afternoon relaxing at the hotel and exploring the grounds.	Gokarna Forest Resort, Kathmandu	B, L, D
Mar 20	Dawn scenic flight around Mount Everest, followed by a bird walk, Monkey Temple tour, and special farewell dinner hosted by Tashi and Nina Tenzing.	Gokarna Forest Resort, Kathmandu	B, L, D
Mar 21	Continue on our India trip or fly home.		B
Mar 22	Arrive home.		

OPTIONS

- Continue your journey on our India trip from March 19 to April 7, 2023. Focus on tiger encounters in Ranthambhore and Bandhavgarh National Parks while searching for other wildlife. Also visit the Bharatpur's wonderful wetland preserve, the famous Taj Mahal in Agra, and the amazing temples in Khajuraho. See full itinerary at <https://cheesemans.com/trips/india-mar2023>.

LEADERS



Tashi Tenzing

Tashi is a Nepalese Sherpa mountaineer and naturalist with an in-depth knowledge of Nepal's wildlife, including where to find birds and tigers in Nepal. He is the grandson of the famous Tenzing Norgay, who made the first ascent of Mount Everest in 1953. Tashi grew up in Darjeeling and received a degree from the University of New Delhi. He successfully climbed Mount Everest and Mount Denali and guided climbing trips in the Antarctic for 10 years. He is based in Kathmandu where his family also runs mountain lodges, builds schools, administers a medical facility, and awards scholarships for young people to attend school.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Mar 3–4 ~ Travel to Kathmandu, Nepal

Mar 5 ~ Arrive in Kathmandu

Arrive in Kathmandu and transfer to your hotel, located about an hour from the airport and nestled next to a 100-acre forest. If you arrive before dark, wander the lodge grounds looking for woodpeckers and barbets in the trees along the edge of the lodge parking lot. If you'd like to go into the forest, ask at reception for their resident forest guide to meet you.

Mar 6 ~ Cultural highlights of Kathmandu Valley

Meet Tashi after breakfast for introductions and a briefing about the trip, and then depart for a full-day city tour with his guide. You'll visit the Boudhanath Stupa and the Pashupatinath Temple which highlight Hindu and Buddhist architecture. Spend the afternoon visiting the old city of Patan, and then depart for your lodge for a Nepalese dinner outside in the lovely garden.

Mar 7 ~ Fly to Pokhara and trek to Majgaon at 4,600ft

Take the 25-minute flight west to Pokhara, the second largest city in Nepal. Pokhara has a great range of altitudes within the city, from 2,700ft in the south to 5,700ft in the north, and offers spectacular views of several majestic mountain chains including Lantang, Manaslu, and Annapurna.

Tashi's assistant, your main trek guide, will meet you at the airport to drive one hour to your starting point in Lumle at about 6,500ft. During the drive, you'll stop to photograph the breathtaking panoramas of the Annapurnas. Trekking from Lumle, you'll walk about one hour to the village of Chandrakot, situated at about 5,200ft. From this village, take in spectacular views of Annapurna South, the sacred and unclimbed Fishtail Mountain (locally known as Machapuchare). Local porters will transport your luggage. From Chandrakot, you will walk through a forested area along a well-worn trail for about one hour to your lodge in Majgaon, situated at about 4,600ft. In the afternoon, if you'd like to explore more, you may walk to the local villages of Tanchowk, Majhgaun, and Patlekhet.

During your three days of trekking, look for resident and migrant birds, including shrikes, magpies, treepies, orioles, drongos, flycatchers, bulbuls, warblers, and sunbirds. Spot Himalayan vulture and other raptors, including eagles and hawks, in flight. Perhaps the unafraid Himalayan whistling thrush (also known as blue

whistling thrush) will sing from the lodge's roof during dawn and dusk. The most common birds in the area are the Himalayan bulbul and the crimson sunbird.

Mar 8 ~ Trek to Landruk at 5,200ft

After breakfast, bid farewell to Majgaon and depart for Landruk. The trail passes through blooming rhododendrons and forests punctuated with Gurung villages. After about four hours, you will arrive in the beautiful village of Landruk where you'll enjoy lunch and then visit a Gurung village while watching the birds found there.

Mar 9 ~ Trek to Ghandruk at 6,700ft

In the morning, soak in the view of the majestic mountains, and after breakfast, begin your last day of trekking. You'll descend the steep trail towards Modi Khola through scattered villages with beautiful views of the Himalayas, and then a steep ascent to reach Ghandruk. The lodge respects the Gurung architecture, with a large common dining room with a friendly fireplace and spectacular views of the mountains, including Gangapurna, Machapuchare (Fishtail), Mount Annapurna, and other snow-capped mountains. If time permits in the afternoon, visit the local museum and the village.

Mar 10 ~ Drive to Pokhara for Peace Pagoda

Today you'll return to vehicle transportation and drive to Pokhara, about one hour away. After lunch, walk along the lakeside to find the special birds here in the hotel gardens. You'll see abundant waterbirds and perhaps even an osprey fishing. Drive up to the famous Peace Pagoda for beautiful views of the surrounding mountains and Pokhara, and watch overhead for raptors riding the thermals, such as eagles and vultures.

Mar 11 ~ Travel to Bardia National Park

Fly to Nepalgunj in Nepal's lowlands – quite a change in scenery from your previous days. Upon arrival, you'll be met with refreshments and transferred to your lodge, approximately two hours away. En route, get a feel for life in the Terai, Nepal's lowlands bordering India to the south. Close to the lodge, you cross the Babai River where marsh mugger crocodiles may be sunning. Once at the lodge, enjoy a Nepali lunch in the outdoor garden. By mid-afternoon, head out on a jeep safari in Bardia National Park until dusk in search of elusive tigers and leopards. Tigers hunt in the cool of the day, so dusk is a great time to catch a glimpse of one of these great cats patrolling its territory. Enjoy an outdoor fireplace before migrating into the Golghar (Nepalese for dining room) for dinner.

Mar 12–15 ~ Bardia National Park

Bardia, the largest national park in the lowland Terai region, was established for the conservation of tigers and their prey. Initially a wildlife reserve, it was expanded in 1988 to protect enough deer habitat for a healthy population of tigers to thrive. In 1997, additional surrounding areas, forests and private lands managed by park authorities and local communities, were added as a buffer zone.

You will have three full days for jeep safaris in the Bardia National Park grasslands, woodlands, and riverbanks. You'll eat early breakfasts so you may spend full days in the park with a picnic lunch along the riverbanks, which is another great place for a tiger to emerge suddenly from the tall (up to 8m!) elephant grass. Shy, smooth-coated otters are also sometimes encountered along the rivers. Your guides will search for tracks along the roads from the jeep, as tigers love to walk on the roads. Herds of beautiful chital (also known as spotted deer) are common (tigers' favorite prey), and you will find black-faced langurs and rhesus macaques along the route.

Mar 16 ~ Drive to Chitwan National Park

Enjoy a big breakfast in the lodge's garden before the long, beautiful drive to Chitwan National Park which takes about six to seven hours. The road passes through other smaller national parks in the Terai region where the native sal forest, a tropical moist deciduous forest dominated by sal trees, has been preserved, but most of the 200mi between Bardia and Chitwan has been converted to agriculture. The lovely homes above shops, all painted in fascinating, unique designs, will especially catch your eye. Arrive at your lodge mid-afternoon in time to explore the grounds for birds, hopefully finding collared falconets, blue whistling thrushes, and tailorbirds.

Mar 17–18 ~ Chitwan National Park

Established in 1973, Chitwan National Park was the first national park in the country. It was granted UNESCO World Heritage Site status in 1984. You will explore its rivers, grasslands, and sal forests. It is home to 68 species of mammals, which include the "King of the Jungle" Bengal tiger, Indian elephant, leopards, greater one-horned rhinoceros, sambar deer, red muntjac, hog deer, herds of chital, and more. It also boasts 544 species of birds.

You will track tigers, elephants, and rhino by looking for footprints along the roads from your jeep. You will also take two boat rides down the Narayani River, the boundary between the national park and the surrounding villages. These boats are big, stable canoes made out of huge kapok tree trunks and propelled by locals who navigate through wild water hyacinths and paddle past sunbathing mugger crocodiles and endangered gharials. The greater one-horned rhinoceros comes down to the river to drink in the morning, a good reason to do more than one boat trip. Several species of storks, ducks, herons, ibis, raptors, and shorebirds hang out along the rivers. Sambar deer, hog deer, gaur, two species of mongoose, and sloth bears are all very memorable mammals to encounter when exploring in the sal forests. Chitwan is also the best place to see Indian elephants in the wild, as they love to bathe and drink in the rivers.

Mar 19 ~ Fly to Kathmandu

After breakfast, drive to Bharatpur for your flight to Kathmandu, arriving in time for lunch at one of Tashi's favorite restaurants in the city. Then transfer to your hotel for a relaxing afternoon.

Mar 20 ~ Mount Everest Flight

Wake up at 5:30am to depart for an amazing one-hour flight around the sky-piercing Mount Everest. After your flight, return to the hotel for breakfast and enjoy a bird walk in the Pokhara forest. Once you are finished with lunch you will depart with Tashi's city guide for the famous Monkey Temple atop a nearby hill, where you also get expansive vistas of the city. End your day with a very special farewell dinner hosted by Tashi and Nima Tenzing in their home.

Mar 21 ~ Join our India trip or fly homeward

You will be transferred from the hotel to the airport for flights to join our India trip (<https://cheesemans.com/trips/india-mar2023>) or for flights home.

Mar 22 ~ Arrive home

COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$8,250
Single Supplement	\$2,100

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for three internal flights), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will find a roommate for you, but if we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

Payment Schedule

Payment	Due Date	Amount per Person
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$500
Final	October 1, 2022	Remaining Balance

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space.

Cancellations

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable except for a cancellation fee of \$150 per person, which can be applied toward another trip if reserved within six months of the cancelled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

Included

- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- Accommodations for the nights of March 5 through March 20.
- Meals from dinner on March 5 through breakfast on March 21.
- Transfers between the Gokarna Forest Resort and the Kathmandu Airport on March 5 and March 21.
- Three internal flights.
- One-hour scenic flight around Mount Everest in a window seat.
- Travel backpack (70 liters) to repack into (you'll need your own daypack). During the trek, porters will carry your travel backpack, but not your daypack.
- During the trekking portion of the trip, you will have access to trekking poles and each night at lodges, you will have a down jacket, gloves, warm hat, and slippers.
- Boiled and filtered water throughout the trip.
- Trip Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

Not Included

- All airfare (except flights listed as included), airport and departure taxes, and any excess baggage fees. Round-trip airfare is approximately \$875 to \$1,200 between the US and Kathmandu, depending on origin
- Passport and visa fees.
- Gratuities – tipping is always discretionary. However, we will add a gratuity of \$272 per participant (\$17 per participant per day for March 5 to March 20 to be distributed among the resident guides and staff who assist Tashi) to your final payment.
- Mandatory emergency medical and evacuation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.
- Optional trip cancellation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages (including bottled water), items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.

SIGN UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

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OTHER DETAILS

Climate

When in the highlands, daytime temperatures generally range from around 55°F (13°C) to 80°F (26°C). When in the lowlands, daytime temperatures are generally in the 70s°F (low- to mid-20s°C). In both regions, overnights and mornings are much cooler. Although it is the dry season, rain is possible. We cannot predict cold snaps or heatwaves, so dress in layers and pack clothes for changing conditions.

Fitness Level

Moderate fitness level is required. Trekking is from around 5 to 6.5mi per day, taking around 4 to 6hrs to arrive to your lodge. Elevation range while trekking is from 3,000 to 7,000ft. The game drives require good energy levels as some days are long. Please contact us if you have any health concerns that may make this trip challenging.

Accommodations

Stay in charming mountain lodges while trekking, and in luxury camps or hotels during the rest of the trip. The trekking lodges provide a down jacket, gloves, warm hat, and slippers each night. All lodges do not have air conditioning but have private baths and are in close proximity to the parks.

Transportation

You will travel by private bus with air conditioning between locations and by open four-wheel drive jeeps in the parks. You will have ample space for your gear. Be prepared to experience bumpy, unpaved roads, and although the vehicles are comfortable, you will be jostled around. You'll take a scenic flight around Mount Everest with everyone in a window seat. The canoes you'll ride in are equipped with back rests and an area in front of you for your gear.

Flights

Unless listed as included, airfare is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Kathmandu, Nepal (KTM) by March 5. Depart from Kathmandu, Nepal (KTM) March 21. **If you are continuing on our India trip**, see the *Flights* section in its itinerary for arrival information (<https://cheesemans.com/trips/india-mar2023>).

Flights we book for you: Three internal flights are included in the trip cost.

Terms and Conditions

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Rio Bravo Reserve in Belize, a Nature Conservancy project (www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/).