

Nepal: The Eyes Of The Buddha



with Atum & Emmanuel
September 23rd – October 4th 2018

Our pilgrimage will take us to the top of the world and into the heart of an enchanting, complex, resilient country. As pilgrims we will journey together through the mandala city of Kathmandu's ancient alleyways, to the natural beauty of villages in the foothills of the Himalayas, to the majestic mountain lakeside city of Pokhara. On our pilgrimage we will see Nepal's culture from many different perspectives and experience an ancient and spiritual way of life. The exploration of identity and how a country lives its individual and collective lives will pose powerful questions and offer meaningful teachings about our own identity and lives.

Religion is deeply ingrained into the Nepalese way of living. Together we will visit Buddhist pilgrimage sites, monasteries and Hindu temples that are a living transmission of a sacred place and culture. Nepal is home to one of the oldest forms of Buddhism. It is where Buddha was born and where Guru Rinpoche found enlightenment. It was Nepal that brought Buddhism to Tibet and Bhutan. Hinduism predates Buddhism and remains vividly alive, preserved and untouched by the Mughal invasion of India and subsequent upheavals. These two great religions and ways of life are interwoven and live side by side. Sacred places are often marked by temples or monuments to both religions and deities from both religions are honored and incarnated into each other's religion. Temples, monasteries, stupas, monuments, and daily rituals fill Nepal from the streets to the mountaintops, and continue to be the center of life. Come join us on this unique magical journey.

The Vision For Our Pilgrimage:

Atum's vision: With deep joy I heard the call to lead a return pilgrimage to Nepal. Having seen the resilience and beauty of the people of Nepal after their devastating earthquake I was filled with a vibrant love for the country. This astounding place holds such opposites for me. Kathmandu is where I met his Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. The encounter in a private meeting profoundly changed my life and Rinpoche has never left me. The Tibetan Shechen monastery that his Holiness built in Katmandu is often referred to as "The Jewel of Nepal". Gifted with a vivid spirit, Nepal also reminds us of the suffering and exploitation present in Third World countries. I remember being in the airport, filled with shock at the scene of hundreds upon hundreds of young Nepalese men leaving the country to work so their families can survive. Some years ago as I was leaving Jerusalem during a very difficult time for the city, a friend said something that is written on my heart, "Don't forget us." Our Nepal journey is centered on showing the Nepalese people that they are not forgotten and that we treasure the profound beauty of their culture.

Emmanuel's vision: Nepal has played a prominent role in my life as a traveling pilgrim and in my spiritual development. My love for Nepal is made from the experience of many forms. I've experienced a Vipassana meditation course and a one month meditation retreat in the hills of the Kopan Monastery. I've taught English in a class of 176 students in a village school, I've spent Christmas trekking the Annapurna Circuit, and was in Nepal during the deadly earthquake of 2015. All of this has brought me a much deeper understanding of what it means to be human and what the journey through life is like for so many people.

For me, this pilgrimage is about being able to share the beauty, the experience of life, and the greater consciousness that comes with being in this life-changing country with fellow pilgrims in a meaningful way.

The tourism industry has bounced back since the devastating earthquake, But Nepal is a country where hardships are built into life. It is a country where around 25% of its population and a large percentage of its income comes from people working abroad and sending money home. Around 1500 Nepalese people leave their homeland every day to

work overseas, often in slave labor conditions in Persian Gulf countries. This pilgrimage seeks to support the people of Nepal. There is something that deeply connects me to Nepal and keeps calling me back. I hope you can join us and discover that deep attraction yourself.

Basic Itinerary for Nepal

September 23rd-27th (Kathmandu Guest House)

- Teachings & Visits to Monasteries, Temples, and Villages in Kathmandu and Kathmandu Valley.

September 27th- 30th (Hotel Middle Path)

- Drive to town of Pokara (5- 7hour drive)
- Teachings & Visits around Pokhara including a Day Trek and a Canoe trip and swim in a secluded part of Begnas Lake

October 1st - 4th (Shechen Monastery Guest House)

- Fly to Kathmandu in the morning. Stay at Shechen Monastery
- Teachings & Visits to Holy sites and to a school for street kids / orphans.
- Pilgrimage ends the morning of the 4th

For a detailed itinerary email emon.okane@gmail.com

Cost

The cost of the Pilgrimage is \$2150 for double occupancy accommodation. Note due to the size of hotel Middle Path and Shechen Monastery there is a limited amount of single rooms available. For Single supplement price please contact Emmanuel. A \$300 *non refundable* deposit is required to hold your place. The cost includes: ***Hotel and breakfast for 11 nights, 4 dinners and 3-4 lunches, all ticket entrances to holy sites and tips for drivers and guides. It also includes all transportation including the flight from Pokhara to Kathmandu, and a guide for most days.*** It does not include international airfare or your visa, and food other than listed.

This pilgrimage is rooted in the idea of service.

- A percentage of the price from each person will be given to charitable organizations.
- Many of the services that we will use support service-based organizations.

- There will also be other opportunities to donate to projects or services if you are interested in doing so.
- We want traveling to be a life-changing experience for people. The ability to travel is a blessing that many people around the world are unable to experience. It is our aim to use part of the proceeds from the pilgrimage to enable someone from an under-developed country to join us on our Pilgrimage.

Please note: this pilgrimage is recommended for experienced travelers. Nepal can be a challenging and unpredictable Third World country.

- A lot can happen in Nepal that is outside of our control and that may impact the pilgrimage in some way.
- Pilgrims will need to be flexible and understanding about any issues that may arise during the pilgrimage.

**Before making a decision about the pilgrimage
Please be aware of the following.**

- Kathmandu can be heavily polluted and Nepal in general can be very dusty. Doctors and medical care aren't up to international/ Western standards. **You are responsible for your own travel / medical insurance.**
- Nepal is a very old country and things like handicap and more user-friendly services in general don't exist. The streets can be chaotic and busy.
- One of the places we will be staying at is Shechen Monastery guest house, accommodation will be simple and basic (but have everything that you will need).
- Inconveniences often bring with them a deeper learning experience and additional valuable insights into life. The specialness of Nepal and its people will more than make up for them.
- **For Pilgrimage questions and information please contact Emmanuel:**
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