

PLACES TO VISIT IN KATHMANDU:

Nepal with rich ancient cultures set against the most dramatic scenery in the world is a land of discovery and unique experience. For broad minded individuals who value an experience that is authentic and mesmerizing, Nepal is the ideal destination. Come and revel in the untouched and the undiscovered and uncover yourself.

The cultural magnitude of Nepal is a celebration of the age-old cultures and its rich traditions. The cultural center and capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu may be a little rough around the edges, but when you dig deeper, it will surprise and delight you.

With medieval temples, the UNESCO World heritage of Durbar square, and the breathtaking view of the Kathmandu valley surrounded by the rolling hills, these are the top attractions in Kathmandu that give you a taste and feel for the city.

1. THAMEL:

Thamel is the oldest part of the capital city. It was also known as **Tabitha Bahal**. This is most likely be the first place you'll visit in the city of Kathmandu and it is a good place to start by taking a walk through the neighborhood.



This haphazard commercial hub is a must-visit. It is one of the busiest neighborhoods in the city. Here you'll find everything from, mountain gear to prepare for your trek at bargain prices. There are antique shops, bookstores and clothing stores. It also offers a variety of restaurant and cafés, and there is a mix of different hotels and hostels.

You'll also find great places for souvenirs and trinkets to take home with you.

Thamel is also the best place to find international food and tourist hangouts. Make sure to head down Mandala Street for some great coffee shops in Thamel.

2. BOUDHANATH STUPA:

One of the top places to visit in Kathmandu is the famous Boudhanath Stupa. It is also one of the largest stupas in all of Nepal making for an awe-inspiring site.

Built in the 14th century, the Boudhanath Stupa is the largest Buddhist stupa in Nepal and is considered one of the most sacred places for Buddhists. Also known as the Boudha Stupa, it was located on the ancient trade route of Nepal and dates back to 600 AD.

The giant Buddha eyes on the top of the stupa and the colorful prayer flags make it one eye-arresting frame. The stupa was hit by the 2015 earthquake but was later restored and opened to visitors just eighteen months after the earthquake.

- Cost for entry to Boudhanath Stupa: 400 NPR (3.50 USD)
- Location – Boudhanath Stupa is 5.9 km from Thamel.

3. SWAYAMBHUNATH TEMPLE – MONKEY TEMPLE:



Known as the Monkey Temple, Swayambhunath Stupa offers panoramic views of Kathmandu City. It is one of the oldest temples in the Kathmandu Valley dating back to 460 AD. This is one of the best places to visit to experience the Buddhist religion with many Buddhist statues and monuments on display.

Located on a hilltop, 3kms west of Kathmandu. this holy shrine flaunts an imposing white stupa with fascinating Buddha eyes and a shimmering golden spire.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Monkey also offers best views of the Kathmandu valley and Kathmandu City. The hanging colorful prayer flags over the stupas make for an absolutely stunning sight.

The name “Swayambhu”, means “Self-Created” and legend says the religious site came into existence more than 2,000 years ago when the valley was created out of a primeval lake.

- Entrance Fee to Monkey Temple – 200 rupees
- Monkey Temple is 8.5 km from Thamel
- 3km outside of Kathmandu City

The main stupa of Swayambhunath is truly outstanding and suffered only minimal damage in the 2015 earthquake. It is worth visiting for the stupa alone but there are plenty of other things to make it worth your visit.

Places to visit at the Swayambhutanath Stupa

- **The largest statue of Sakyamuni Buddha in Nepal**
- **Temple dedicated to the Goddess of learning**
- **The huge gold plated Vajra ‘thunderbolt’ set in the east side of the stupa.**
- **The Sleeping Buddha.**
- **The Dewa Dharma Monastery**

4. KATHMANDU DURBAR SQUARE:



The Kathmandu Durbar Square is a prominent landmark of the city and one of the top tourist places in Kathmandu.

The heart of the old town, the Durbar square was once the place where the King was crowned. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is one of three such Squares in the Kathmandu Valley.

Many a King of Nepal ruled from this palace. The 2015 earthquake collapsed many temples, but it continues to undergo reconstruction it is still one of the top places to visit in Kathmandu.

Things to see in Durbar Square

- **Kala Bairav**
- **Jagganath Temple**
- **Taleju Temple – Taleju Temple is not open to the public, but it is the highest temple in the square and cannot be missed.**
- **Mahendreshwar Temple**
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The best time to visit Durbar Square is early in the morning before the crowds arrive as it is one of the most well-known places in Kathmandu and attracts many visitors. **Kathmandu Durbar Square is just 1.6 km from Thamel**

5. HANUMAN DHOKA:



Located in Durbar Square, The Hanuman Gate is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is a palace complex of Pagoda styled temples, dating back to the period from the 15th to 18th Century. Be sure to look for the statue of Hanuman the Monkey God.

The temples were devastated by the 2015 earthquake but it is still one of the best places to visit in Kathmandu.

6. KUMARI BAHAL:

One of the best things to do in Kathmandu is to see its living Goddess. Kumari Bahal is home to the Kumara. Kathmandu's living symbol female spirituality known as Devi. You can see the living Goddess with our own eyes daily between 9:00 and 11:00 am. (no photographs are allowed of her face)

To actually see a living deity makes this one of the coolest tourist attractions in Kathmandu. And don't get me wrong, this may be spiritual, but it is a tourist attraction. She refused to show her face at one time because the Nepal Government refused to give her a cut of the Durbar Square attraction fee.

- Best time to visit between 9 and 11 am
- Cost of entrance: 1000 Rupees

7. PASHUPATINATH TEMPLE:



Another one of the top places to visit in Kathmandu is Pashupati temple. It is one of the most sacred places for Hindu devotees in Nepal and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

This temple complex located on the banks of the Bagmati River, is the largest in Nepal. It was built in the 5th century and later renovated by the

Malla Kings. The main temple in the complex is dedicated to Lord Shiva and is restricted to Hindus only.

If you ever visit the complex, you can also see the cremation ceremonies of Hindus on raised platforms along the river which I found quite disturbing.

Don't get fooled by those painted saints (Sadhus) in the temple complex who demand money if you wish to take a photo of them. Either be prepared to pay or don't take their photo.

8. GARDEN OF DREAMS:



Garden of Dreams. Kathmandu. Nepal

The Garden of Dreams, aka Swapna Bagaicha is a quiet retreat just minutes from the chaotic streets of Kathmandu City. After decades of neglect, it has been restored to its natural beauty.

The Garden of Dreams was built in the 1920s to represent a classic English walled garden and was considered one of the most beautiful gardens of its time.

Located in the heart of Kathmandu, you'll be surprised with the quiet oasis housing gardens, pavilions, quiet pools, and a tranquil amphitheater. If you are looking for a place to relax, The Garden of Dreams is definitely a must visit in Kathmandu for a quiet afternoon.

9. NARAYANHITI PALACE MUSEUM:

Museum goers will enjoy a visit to Narayanhiti Palace Museum. The former royal palace to King Gyanendra, was transformed to the People's museum after he was evicted in 2008. He was believed to have taken power after killing the royal family in 2001.

You can tour the 52 rooms of the palace getting a glimpse of how the royalty of Nepal lived.

Located just 750 meters from Thamel making it a good place to visit if you are staying in the area.

10. ASAN TOLE:

Make sure to visit the busiest square in Kathmandu. Asan Tole is filled with vendors selling vegetables, spice and other foods. It's a fantastic place for people watching and for getting into the vibe of life in Kathmandu.

The Annapurna Temple is located here dedicated to the Goddess of abundance and you'll also find the **Narayan shrine** (Narayan is a form of Vishnu).

11. PATAN:



If there is any place that swept me off my feet in Kathmandu, it has to be Patan. Located 5 km south in the outskirts of Kathmandu, Patan is traditionally known as Lalitpur (City Of Beauty).

Patan is apparently the oldest town in the Kathmandu Valley, flaunting the finest collection of temples, palaces and monuments. The locals also call Patan by its Newari name, Yala.

The intricate details of the Newari Architectures, the large courtyard of the palace, the wood, and stone carvings in the temples are simply jaw-dropping.

Patan (the city of Lalitpur) is surrounded by four stupas which were built by Emperor Ashoka. Durbar Square is a lively place buzzing with locals and tourists all the time.

A visit to Patan is absolutely mandatory for first time visitors. It is nothing less than an architectural treasure.

12. BHAKTAPUR:



Bhaktapur is one of the best places to visit to experience traditional Nepalese culture. Located 13 km from Kathmandu, Bhaktapur is known as the city of temples. It is filled with towering temples and ancient heritage.

The Bhaktapur Durbar Square is the third of its kind in the Kathmandu Valley and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is a good place to visit as it wasn't quite as affected by the 2015 earthquake as Kathmandu and other areas in the Kathmandu Valley.

Bhaktapur draws many tourists to experience its timeless way of life. Make sure to go to Nyatapola Temple, Taumadhi Square and Dattatreya Temple. Get lost in its narrow streets to see artisans and traditional life in the City of Devotion.

13. CHANGU NARAYAN:

Located 12 km from Kathmandu City and just a few km from Bhaktapur, this UNESCO World Heritage site is another popular day trip from Nepal. This Hindu Temple sits high on a hill looking over the Manohara River. It is one of the oldest and well known Hindu Temples in the Kathmandu area still in operation.