Khopra Danda Trek With Khayer Lake – 10 Days

Khopra Danda Trek 10 Days: Ridge Views, Sacred Lakes & Hidden Villages

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The **Khopra Danda Trek**, also widely known as the Khopra Ridge Trek, stands out as one of the finest hidden gems in the Annapurna region of Nepal. If you wish to escape commercialized trails, this specific adventure offers a peaceful alternative to the nearby crowded circuits. Moreover, it combines breathtaking mountain scenery with authentic local hospitality.

Why Choose This Off-the-Beaten-Path Route?

Unlike conventional routes, the **Khopra Danda Trek** guides travelers along pristine ridge paths, dense rhododendron forests, and traditional Gurung villages. Consequently, you will experience the quiet side of the Himalayas while enjoying grand vistas of giant peaks such as Mount Dhaulagiri, Annapurna South, Hiunchuli, and Machhapuchhre.

Reaching a maximum ridge altitude of **3,660 meters**, this alpine journey delivers close-up views without requiring high-altitude mountaineering skills. Additionally, ambitious hikers can take an optional day hike from the ridge up to the sacred **Khayar Lake at 4,600 meters**. On your return journey, you will also visit the iconic Poon Hill Sunrise Viewpoint to capture golden light spreading across the mountain horizon.

Furthermore, this trail takes you into quiet settlements like Swanta, where you can taste fresh yak cheese at a community-run factory. To prepare for your journey, feel free to check our detailed Nepal Trekking Equipment List or consult official guidelines from the Nepal Tourism Board regarding entry permits and seasonal conditions.

Key Highlights & Scenic Wonders

- **Uncrowded Ridge Trail:** Experience a quiet, off-the-beaten-path alternative to classic routes.
- **Panoramic Mountain Views:** Observe 360-degree vistas of the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna massifs from Khopra Danda (3,660 m).
- **Optional Khayar Lake Excursion:** Trek up to the sacred high-altitude alpine lake (4,600 m) situated directly beneath Annapurna South.
- **Classic Poon Hill Sunrise:** Enjoy legendary early morning sunrise views over snow-capped Himalayan ranges.
- **Authentic Cultural Immersion:** Stay in local community tea houses and visit the traditional yak cheese factory in Swanta village.

Essential Trip Overview

- **Duration:** 10 Days
- **Maximum Elevation:** 3,660 meters at Khopra Danda *(4,600 meters at Khayar Lake optional hike)*
- **Trek Grade:** Moderate
- **Best Seasons:** February to June (Spring) & September to December (Autumn)
- **Start & Finish Point:** Kathmandu / Pokhara

Frequently Asked Questions

How difficult is the Khopra Danda Trek?

The Khopra Danda Trek is graded as moderate. While it does not require technical climbing skills or extreme high-altitude experience, it involves daily walking of 4 to 7 hours over stone staircases, forest trails, and open mountain ridges.

What is the maximum altitude reached on the Khopra Danda Trek?

The main trail reaches a maximum altitude of 3,660 meters (12,007 ft) at Khopra Danda (Khopra Ridge). An optional side hike to the sacred Khayar Lake reaches an elevation of 4,600

meters (15,091 ft).

Is altitude sickness (AMS) a major concern on this route?

Because the main overnight stay at Khopra Danda is at 3,660 meters, the risk of acute mountain sickness (AMS) is relatively low compared to high-pass treks. Proper hydration and gradual ascent ensure a safe experience.

What kind of accommodation is available on the trek?

Along the trail, you will stay in traditional tea houses and community-run lodges. Facilities are clean, cozy, and rustic with twin-sharing rooms.

What is the best season for the Khopra Danda Trek?

The best seasons are Spring (February to May) for blooming rhododendron forests and warm days, and Autumn (September to December) for crystal-clear skies and crisp mountain views.

Are meals provided during the Khopra Danda Trek?

Yes, full board meals (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner) are included during the trekking days, offering both fresh local Nepali dishes and basic international options.

Do I need personal travel insurance for this trek?

Yes, travel insurance is mandatory. Your policy must cover emergency medical expenses and high-altitude emergency helicopter evacuation up to 4,500 meters.

Itinerary

Day 1: Drive or Fly from Kathmandu to Pokhara

Departing Kathmandu after breakfast, your journey begins with a scenic drive along the highway winding through river valleys and traditional hill villages, or via a short domestic flight. Arriving at the tranquil lakeside city of Pokhara, check into your hotel and spend the afternoon strolling along Phewa Lake while enjoying views of the Annapurna range.

- Location: Pokhara
- Elevation: 822 meters / 2,697 feet
- Distance: ~200 km drive or 25-minute flight

- Time: 6 to 7 hours drive or 25 minutes flight
- Accommodation: Hotel
- Meal Plan: Full Board (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 2: Drive from Pokhara to Nayapul and Trek to Ghandruk

Boarding your vehicle in Pokhara, enjoy a short drive along the river valley to Nayapul, the starting trail point. Following the Modi Khola through Birethanti and Sauly Bazaar, the trail climbs up well-paved stone staircases through terraced fields until you reach the vibrant Gurung village of Ghandruk, known for its slate-roofed houses and mountain views.

- Location: Ghandruk
- Elevation: 1,940 meters / 6,365 feet
- Distance: ~42 km drive + 9 km trek
- Time: 1 hour drive + 4 to 5 hours trek
- Accommodation: Tea House / Lodge
- Meal Plan: Full Board (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 3: Trek from Ghandruk to Tadapani

Leaving the stone alleys and terraced slopes of Ghandruk behind, the trail ascends through cool, mossy forests of rhododendron and oak. Passing through peaceful forest clearings like Baisi Kharka, you will enjoy striking vistas of Machhapuchhre (Fishtail) and Annapurna South before arriving at the hilltop settlement of Tadapani.

- Location: Tadapani
- Elevation: 2,675 meters / 8,776 feet
- Distance: ~7 km trek
- Time: 3 to 4 hours trek
- Accommodation: Tea House / Lodge
- Meal Plan: Full Board (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 4: Trek from Tadapani to Bayeli Kharka

Turning off the heavily traveled main circuit onto a quiet, off-the-beaten-path trail, today's hike ascends steadily through old-growth forests above the timberline. Emerging into open alpine ridge country, you will enjoy panoramic views of the Dhaulagiri massif before descending slightly into the peaceful pasture clearing of Bayeli Kharka.

- Location: Bayeli Kharka
- Elevation: 3,450 meters / 11,318 feet
- Distance: ~9 km trek
- Time: 5 to 6 hours trek
- Accommodation: Community Lodge / Tea House
- Meal Plan: Full Board (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 5: Trek from Bayeli Kharka to Khopra Danda

Descending briefly through alpine forests into the lush pastures of Chistibang, the trail then begins an uphill climb above the tree line. Ascending open mountain ridges where wildlife like Himalayan Tahr can often be spotted, you reach Khopra Danda (Ridge) for dramatic, uninterrupted panoramas of Dhaulagiri, Annapurna I, and Nilgiri.

- Location: Khopra Danda (Khopra Ridge)
- Elevation: 3,660 meters / 12,007 feet
- Distance: ~8 km trek
- Time: 5 to 6 hours trek
- Accommodation: Community Lodge / Tea House
- Meal Plan: Full Board (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 6: Excursion to Khayar Lake or Trek to Swanta Village

Embark on a high-altitude hike along steep ridge paths to the sacred, crystal-clear Khayar Lake (4,600 m) situated directly at the base of Annapurna South before returning to the ridge. Alternatively, take a relaxed downhill trail through alpine meadows into the traditional village of Swanta to visit its community-run yak cheese factory.

- Location: Swanta (via optional Khayar Lake excursion)
- Elevation: 2,214 meters / 7,263 feet (Khayar Lake at 4,600 m / 15,091 ft)
- Distance: ~13 km trek (with lake) or ~6 km direct trek to Swanta
- Time: 7 to 8 hours trek (with lake) or 3 to 4 hours trek (direct)
- Accommodation: Tea House / Community Lodge
- Meal Plan: Full Board (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 7: Trek from Swanta to Ghorepani

Descending through local farm fields to a mountain stream, cross a wooden suspension bridge before ascending toward Chittre to rejoin the main trail. From here, a steady climb through rhododendron woods leads up to the bustling ridge village of Ghorepani, famous for its views across the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna massifs.

- Location: Ghorepani
- Elevation: 2,880 meters / 9,448 feet
- Distance: ~9 km trek
- Time: 4 to 5 hours trek
- Accommodation: Tea House / Lodge
- Meal Plan: Full Board (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 8: Early Hike to Poon Hill, Trek to Nayapul, and Drive to Pokhara

Waking early before dawn, ascend stone staircases to the summit of Poon Hill (3,210 m) for a sunrise over the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri ranges. After returning to Ghorepani for breakfast, trek down through sub-tropical forests to Nayapul and board a private vehicle for the short drive back to Pokhara.

- Location: Pokhara (via Poon Hill & Nayapul)
- Elevation: 822 meters / 2,697 feet (Poon Hill at 3,210 m / 10,531 ft)
- Distance: ~14 km trek + 42 km drive

- Time: 5 to 6 hours trek + 1 hour drive
- Accommodation: Hotel
- Meal Plan: Full Board (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 9: Drive or Fly from Pokhara back to Kathmandu

Leaving the lakesides of Pokhara, travel back across the hill country to Kathmandu via a scenic drive along the river corridors or a quick flight. Upon arriving in the capital, check into your hotel and gather in the evening for a traditional Nepali farewell dinner hosted by the team to celebrate your journey.

- Location: Kathmandu
- Elevation: 1,400 meters / 4,593 feet
- Distance: ~200 km drive or 25-minute flight
- Time: 6 to 7 hours drive or 25 minutes flight
- Accommodation: Hotel
- Meal Plan: Breakfast & Farewell Dinner

Day 10: Final Departure from Kathmandu

Enjoy a final breakfast at your hotel in Kathmandu before checking out. At the designated time, your driver will pick you up via private vehicle and transfer you to Tribhuvan International Airport three hours prior to your international flight home.

- Location: Kathmandu (Tribhuvan International Airport)
- Elevation: 1,400 meters / 4,593 feet
- Distance: ~6 km drive
- Time: 30 minutes drive
- Accommodation: None
- Meal Plan: Breakfast

Inclusions

- **Airport Transfers:** Private vehicle pick-up and drop-off service for both international and domestic flights.
- **All Ground & Air Transportation:** All private vehicle or tourist bus transfers (or optional Pokhara flights) as specified in the 10-day itinerary.
- **Kathmandu & Pokhara Accommodation:** Hotel stay in Kathmandu and Pokhara on a Bed & Breakfast (B&B) basis.
- **Trek Accommodation:** Clean tea house or community lodge accommodations during the trek.
- **Full Board Trekking Meals:** Three full meals per day (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner) throughout the trek, including hot soup at high elevations.
- **Expert Local Staff:** A certified, professional trekking guide (plus an assistant guide for groups larger than 10 people).
- **Porter Service:** Dedicated porter service to carry your luggage (1 porter for every 2 trekkers).
- **Staff Cover & Welfare:** Full insurance, meals, accommodation, and fair daily wages for all guides and porters.

- **Permits & Documentation:** All required trekking permits, including Annapurna Conservation Area Permit (ACAP) and TIMS card.
- **Safety & Navigation:** Comprehensive medical kit carried by the guide, along with an official route trekking map.
- **Taxes & Formalities:** All applicable government taxes, local fees, and airport taxes.
- **Complimentary Extras:** Official company souvenir T-shirt, a traditional farewell dinner in Kathmandu, and an official Trip Completion Certificate.

Exclusions

- **International Airfare & Visa:** International flight tickets to/from Kathmandu and Nepal entry visa fees upon arrival.
- **Meals in Kathmandu & Pokhara:** Lunch and dinner during your stay in Kathmandu and Pokhara (except for the complimentary farewell dinner in Kathmandu).
- **Monument Entry Fees:** Entrance and sight-seeing fees for UNESCO World Heritage sites, temples, and museums in Kathmandu or Pokhara.
- **Travel & Rescue Insurance:** Mandatory personal travel, medical, and high-altitude emergency evacuation/rescue insurance for all trekkers.
- **Personal Expenses:** Hot showers, electronic device charging fees, laundry services, alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, and bottled mineral water during the trek.
- **Extra Accommodation:** Additional nights' hotel accommodation in Kathmandu or Pokhara beyond the planned itinerary due to early arrival, late departure, or unforeseen delays.
- **Tips & Gratuities:** Tips for your trekking guide, assistant guide, porters, and drivers (a customary token of appreciation for quality service).